Charity, Mutuality and Philanthropy: Voluntary Provision in Bristol 1800-70

by
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Abstract

The thesis begins by defining voluntarism as an area of social action distinct from that of the state, the market or informal agencies such as the family. Three main categories are identified: endowed charities, mutual associations and subscription societies / institutions. Each of these forms is examined in turn, with the aim of showing how they developed between c.1800, commonly seen as a turning point in the history of charity and mutuality, and c.1870, by which time the state was playing an increasing role in areas previously dominated by voluntary effort. The introductory chapters survey the literature on voluntarism and provide contextual information on Bristol's society and economy in the nineteenth century. Section I examines long run trends in endowed charity and shows that this form of giving became less prominent in the period 1800-1870. It challenges the view that this resulted from corrupt or incompetent administration, pointing out that these problems had always attended charities; it also suggests that the rise of subscriber charities is insufficient explanation of the change in trend. Instead stress is laid firstly on the prominence of charity as an issue in party politics, and secondly on the diminishing role of the parish in local government, which deterred potential donors. Section II discusses friendly societies and other mutual associations. It raises doubts about conventional assumptions concerning the origin, growth and membership of friendly societies. The limitations of the societies' capacity to insure against risk are highlighted, and social and cultural reasons for their attraction are advanced. Section III examines subscriber charities, and accounts for their growth and development. Analysis of charity finances points to their strengths and weaknesses as a means of funding welfare. Little evidence is found for voluntary charity as an area of social consensus; instead it reflected the divided political and religious identity of the middle class.

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Declaration

I certify that this dissertation reflects the original work of the author, without collaboration, except where appropriate reference is made in the text. The views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and not of the University.

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Abbreviations
used in the thesis

BRO	Bristol Record Office
BRL	Bristol Reference Library
BMC	Bristol Municipal Charities
BMC MB	Bristol Municipal Charities, Minute Book
BMC NC	Bristol Municipal Charities, Newspaper Cuttings
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew
Manchee	Thomas John Manchee ed. *The Bristol Charities, being the Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring Concerning Charities in England and Wales so far as relates to The Charitable Institutions in Bristol* Vols I & II, (Bristol, 1831)
FFBJ	*Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
Young	PP 1874 xxiii pt.2, *Friendly Societies Commission: - Appendix to Sir G.Young's Report*
GRB	E.W.W.Veale ed. *The Great Red Book of Bristol* part I, Bristol Record Society Publications Vol. IV (Bristol, 1933), Bristol Record Society Publications part III, Vol. XVI (Bristol, 1951).
LRB	F.Bickley ed.*The Little Red Book of Bristol* (Bristol 1900), vol I
BABS	Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society
BDPE	Bristol and District Permanent Economic Benefit Building and Investment Society
PMFS	Prudent Man's Friend Society

Introduction:

Chapter 1

Philanthropy, Charity and Mutuality in the Nineteenth Century, theories and definitions.

This thesis presents a study of voluntary provision in the city of Bristol from 1800 to 1870. In employing the concept of 'voluntarism' to gather its various themes I follow the definition offered by William Beveridge in 1948: 'The term "Voluntary Action," as used here, means private action, that is to say not under the directions of any authority wielding the power of the State'. And like Beveridge I limit my study to '...Voluntary Action outside each citizen's home for improving the condition of life for him and his fellows'. [1] Thus the main areas under consideration are the city's old endowed charities, its mutualist organisations, especially its friendly societies, and its philanthropic institutions and associations.

The project was originally conceived as a study of philanthropy in the provincial city, but it became rapidly apparent that this initial quarry had not been systematically theorised, and that its historiography offered no obvious guide as to how a regional case study might proceed. My first task is therefore to discuss that historiography and justify the way that the boundaries of the subject area were eventually drawn.

a) Historical perspectives on philanthropy

The first powerful narrative shaping the history of voluntary effort arose from the whig/liberal tradition, and was structured by a sense of progress towards modernity. A formative work was *A History of English Philanthropy* published in 1905 by B.Kirkman Gray. [2] He suggested an evolutionary model, in which social provision proceeded through different phases, from an earlier era of endowed charity, to the age of the voluntary society in the 18th and 19th centuries, leading up to an increasing dominance of the state as the 20th century approached. The first study of provincial

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1 Lord Beveridge *Voluntary Action: A Report on Methods of Social Advance* (London, 1948) p.8; see also the discussion of the term in Geoffrey Finlayson *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990* (Oxford, 1994) pp.6-8.

2 B.Kirkman Gray *A History of English Philanthropy* (London, 1905), which began as a series of LSE lectures and acknowledges the assistance of Beatrice and Sidney Webb; it is still cited as a standard text, see Paul Langford *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727-1783* (London, 1989) p.751.

charity, Margaret Simey's work on Liverpool, saw the Liberal social legislation as rooted in the sense of collective responsibility which voluntarism had fostered. [3] Evolutionary assumptions also underpinned the two major texts on English philanthropy. W.K.Jordan's *Philanthropy in England, 1480-1660* marshalled a large body of evidence to establish the early modern period as the era of endowed charity, with the pivot of the argument being the origins and impact of the late Elizabethan Statute of Charitable Uses, which enshrined this type of provision. [4] Endowed charity took the legal form of a trust, where either money or land was given in a deed or will, and the annual income of the endowment used to fund a scheme designated by the donor. Popular causes were schools, almshouses, hospitals, parish doles of food, money or clothing, loans to bind apprentices and so on. Jordan made large claims for the overall contribution of this private charitable sector, arguing that between 1560 and 1660 it provided 93% of all national sums spent on the needy, as against a mere 7% from the poor rates. His treatment of philanthropy as the secularization of social policy after the dissolution of the monastries and chantries was optimistic: early modern benefactors were '...most effectively translating their ideals for society into a new philosophy of the state which we denominate liberalism'. [5] In 1964 this work was followed by David Owen's *English Philanthropy, 1660-1960.* [6] Owen recounted the disillusion with the system of endowment that led to the founding of the Charity Commission in the early 19th century. Voluntary charities, particularly hospitals, benevolent schools and poor relief institutions based on subscription, received a thorough, mainly empirical account. When the 20th century was reached these heroic days were over and philanthropy had become the 'junior partner in the welfare firm'. [7] Liberal England had finally come of age.

Jordan and Owen presented the motive for philanthropy in functional terms. Individuals within society were simply responding to changing conditions, although this response might be mediated sometimes by the religious imperative, sometimes by humanitarianism, sometimes by personal

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3 Margaret Simey *Charitable Effort in Liverpool in the Nineteenth Century* (1951), republished as *Charity Rediscovered: A Study of Philanthropic Effort in Nineteenth-Century Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1992), see esp. ch.x.
4 W.K.Jordan *Philanthropy in England, 1480-1660* (London, 1959).
5 Ibid., p18, and see p.321 for similar sentiments on the birth of liberalism.
6 David Owen *English Philanthropy 1660-1960* (London, 1964).
7 Ibid., ch.xix; .

example of the great, and so on. Individual agency was in most cases simply unknowable, or as Jordan put it:'..deep in the recesses of our nature, immune, perhaps happily from the fumbling probing of the historian, and, certainly happily, from the too arrogantly pitched enquiry of the psychoanalyst'. [8]

If the chronicle of the 'evolution of the welfare state' shaped histories of philanthropy, it was also instrumental in marginalising voluntarism from studies of 19th century social policy, which until quite recently were approached from the explanatory perspective of growing government involvement. [9] There were occasional hints that consideration of philanthropy was a rather major absence, for example when brief reference was made to Sampson Low's famous observation in his *Charities of London* that in 1861 philanthropic income of £2.5m p.a. far exceeded Poor Law expenditure in the capital. [10] But these were quickly passed by to return to the grand narrative of factory reform, Education Acts and National Insurance. Thus relegated from a central role in the history of social policy, interest in philanthropy was sustained by its capacity to explicate class relations.

The new social history of the 1960s and 1970s was preoccupied with themes of class formation, and a conflict based model of 19th century development, and it found much grist for its mill in charity as nexus of class interaction. In assuming a more critical posture towards benevolence it was also following in an established radical tradition. This can be traced back at least as far as William Cobbett's attack on the charity soup kitchens of 1816:

> '..where meetings of the Subscription Tribe have been held, the people have told them that they want not Soup and Old Bones and Bullock's liver; but they want their rights' [11]

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8 W.K.Jordan op.cit. p.144.

9 For example Derek Fraser *The Evolution of the British Welfare State* (London, 1973); Ursula Henriques *Before the Welfare State* (London, 1979); for critiques of the whiggishness of welfare historians, see Frank Prochaska *The Voluntary Impulse* (London, 1988) pp.xiii-xv, Geoffrey Finlayson op. cit., pp.2-6, and David Thomson 'Welfare and the Historians' in Lloyd Bonfield, Richard M.Smith and Keith Wrightson ed. *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure* (Oxford, 1980) pp.355-358.

10 Derek Fraser op. cit., p.126

11 *Political Register* 3/11/1816.

In similar vein Engels had castigated the Manchester bourgeoisie in the *Condition of the Working Classes*:

> 'Philanthropic institutions forsooth! As though you rendered the proletarians a service in first sucking out their very life-blood and then practising your self-complacent, Pharisaic philanthropy upon them, placing yourselves before the world as mighty benefactors of humanity when you give back to the plundered victims the hundredth part of what belongs to them!' [12]

Both Marxists and non-Marxists saw an active role for philanthropy in the changing social order. A sense of a decisive shift in the nature of charity, emanating from transformations in social structure in the early nineteenth century, was observed by Harold Perkin. He charted the movement away from the 'personal, face-to-face relationships of patronage' which characterised philanthropy in the 'old society', where beneficence was dispensed by 'the squire's wife and daughters'. Voluntary charities were stimulated by the 'abdication of the governors' from paternal duties, combined with a new approach to poverty associated with the 'entrepreneurial ideal' of the aspiring middle class, and the urgent demands of the growing cities. [13] A similar identification of charity with new class relationships also informed Gareth Stedman Jones' study of mid-Victorian London, where '...old methods of social control based on the model of the squire, the parson, face to face relations, deference and paternalism, found less and less reflection in the urban reality'. [14]

The theme of domination and consensus was recurrent. While discussion of charity did not figure greatly in the works of Edward Thompson, it was one component of the 'theatre of the great' that secured plebeian consent for patrician rule in the 18th century. [15] However John Foster's *Class Struggle in the Industrial Revolution* explicitly targetted philanthropy, particularly the temperance movement, Sunday Schools and Mechanics Institutes, as an agency by which the bourgeisie asserted

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12 Frederick Engels *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1882) Grafton p/b., edn. 1982 p.303.
13 Harold Perkin *Origins of Modern English Society* (London, 1969) pp. 50-1, 120-122, 183-195, 224-5.
14 Gareth Stedman Jones *Outcast London. A Study in the Relationship between Classes in Victorian Society* (Oxford, 1971) p.14.
15 E.P.Thompson 'Patrician Society, Plebian Culture' *Journal of Social History* viii (1974) pp.382-405, revised in *Customs in Common* (London, 1991) pp.46, 72, 74.

hegemony and control over a potentially revolutionary proletariat. [16] Caroline Reid's analysis of how a culture of 'respectability' was promulgated to the Sheffield working class made a similar case. [17] At the same time, historians of education such as Phillip McCann argued that, for all its liberating power, if literacy was delivered through charity and Sunday schools, then it tended to sustain the status quo, particularly if laced with heavy doses of Evangelical religion. [18] In other words, like policing and the suppression of popular leisure, philanthropy operated as a weapon of social control.

The most schematic articulation of the relationship between voluntary charity and the 'birth of class' is to be found in the works of R.J.Morris and Theodore Koditschek. [19] Class formation was defined by Morris as a fundamental shift in the way the middle class (a social structure of 'perceived regularities in social actions and relationships') experienced and thought about power relationships - political, ideological, cultural and economic. The transformation occurred between 1780 and 1850, with the 1830s the most intense phase of the project to assert 'group identity and authority'. Koditschek's formulation explicitly linked the new associational ethos with material concerns of new men. Thus the identity of the 'entrepreneurial bourgeoisie' was buttressed by an 'individualistic, salvation-centred brand of spirituality' offered by the expanding non-conformist sects. Fortified by religious associationalism the middle class established 'spinoff' agencies, religious and secular, in which the liberal ideal of 'secular self-help' was promoted, and poverty viewed as moral failing. [20]

Morris laid particular stress on the political and cultural dissatisfaction, along with the fear and conflict, which urban life in this period provoked, and suggested that the ideal medium for resolving these tensions and mobilising collective action was the voluntary society. Its form and conventions provided a 'neutral area of public life', in which the elite could lead all members of the middle class,

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16 John Foster *Class Struggle in the Industrial Revolution: early industrial capitalism in three English towns* (London, 1974).

17 Caroline Reid 'Middle Class Values and Working Class Culture in Nineteenth Century Sheffield - the Pursuit of Respectability', S.Pollard and C.Holmes ed. *Essays in the Economic and Social History of South Yorkshire* (Sheffield, 1976), pp.280-287.

18 Phillip McCann 'Popular education, socialization and social control: Spitalfields 1812-1824' in Phillip McCann ed. *Popular Education and Socialization in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1977).

19 R.J.Morris 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites, 1780-1850; An Analysis', *The Historical Journal*, 26, I (1983) pp.95-118; idem., *Class, Sect and Party. The making of the British middle class, Leeds 1820-1850* (Manchester, 1990): it is significant that the title, as well as the periodisation of class consciousness dovetails with that proposed by E.P.Thompson for the making of the English working class.

20 Theodore Koditschek *Class Formation and Urban-Industrial Society. Bradford, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, 1990), chs.9, 10, 11, esp. pp.247-251, 287, 268-9,

regardless of status level, sect or party, and weld a coherent identity based on a 'common framework of assumptions'. [21] Power and authority could then be asserted on a dangerous, unpredictable and chaotic urban environment, and the consent of the working class for the new industrial order won. The 'British bourgeois ideology' achieved through voluntary action set the agenda for public life over the next century. Its components were:

> 'the moral value of social discipline; the moral value of work; the rightness of inequality; the relationship of inequality to merit; the need for paternalistic regulation of that inequality; a total assurance of the correctness of British economic progress and world political authority; an uneasiness over the stability of their own authority but never of its correctness and a confident central place for religion in social life.' [22]

Class formation was not the only analytical tool which historians of philanthropy drew from classical sociology - the themes of the gift relationship and the principle of reciprocity were also brought into play. A comprehensive theory of the gift relationship was first formulated by Marcel Mauss, based on observation of ritual prestation among traditional peoples, notably the 'potlatch' ceremony of the Kwakuitl Indians. [23] Salient features were the social obligation to give, as a register of status, and the obligation to repay: 'face is lost forever if it (repayment) is not made...'. Mauss concluded that ritual gift exchange was a means of asserting status and establishing social structure, and he asked 'Are we certain that our own position is different and that wealth with us is not first and foremeost a means of controlling others?' [24] The principle of reciprocity in the gift relationship was also suggested by Georg Simmel, in an early sociological analysis of poverty. He defined 'the poor' as a social group characterised not by lack of material goods in an absolute sense, but by the assistance they receive (or should receive) because of this lack. Hence the purpose of giving to the poor is to '...mitigate certain extreme manifestations of social differentiation, so that

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21 R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit., chs. 1, 7, 10, 11. 13 are most relevant; quotes, pp.1, 5, 323, 324.
22 Ibid., p.7.
23 Marcel Mauss *The Gift* (1925) edn. London 1967, trans. I Cunnison.
24 Ibid., pp.37-41, 73.

the social structure may continue to be based on this differentiation'. [25] The means by which this is achieved is through gratitude: 'If every grateful action, which lingers on from good turns received in the past, were suddenly eliminated, society ... would break apart.' [26] More recent applications have explored the gift within the family to show its importance as an agency of socialization, for example through its capacity to determine gender norms and establish reciprocal obligation between parent and child. [27]

Despite the potentially wide application of gift theory it has thus far been used historically to buttress existing discussion of class tension. The power of the gift to convey status readily coincides with the notion of philanthropy as a locus of class formation; what better way to announce one's membership of an urban elite than to have one's name in a public subscription list? Likewise the idea of reciprocity supported the argument that philanthropy helped to achieve the worker's consent for the inequities of capitalist society. For Howard Newby charity was a vital aspect of the exercise of traditional authority which went to create what he called the 'deferential dialectic' - the ingrained proletarian respect for hierarchy. [28] Gareth Stedman Jones' application of the gift thesis dealt particularly with the Charity Organisation Society in the late 19th century. This was a nationwide organisation with headquarters in London, established to co-ordinate charitable activity and ensure that recipients were only the genuinely needy. Stedman Jones traced its inception to what he called 'the deformation of the gift' - in other words the perception that the reciprocity of the charity relationship was being scorned by a feckless underclass who treated benevolent handouts as a right, and made no effort to conform to the norms of respectability, self-help, and temperance which the donors expected. [29]

The dominant theoretical framework has therefore situated the benevolent act within a context of philanthropy as a power relationship between different economic groups, with the motive of

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[25] Georg Simmel 'The Poor' (1908), collected in K.Wolff ed. *The Sociology of Georg Simmel* (1950) ed. New York 1964, trans. C.Jacobson, p.155.
[26] Georg Simmel 'Faithfulness and Gratitude' in ibid., p.259.
[27] B.Schwartz 'The Social Psychology of the Gift' *The American Journal of Sociology* 73, 1, (1967) pp.1-11; Claude Levi-Strauss 'The Principle of Reciprocity', L.Coser and B.Rosenberg ed. *Sociological Theory* (New York, 1965); see also James G.Carrier 'The Rituals of Christmas Giving', Daniel Miller ed. *Unwrapping Christmas* (Oxford, 1993).
[28] Howard Newby 'The Deferential Dialectic', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17, (1975) pp.139-164.
[29] Gareth Stedman Jones op. cit., chs. 13, 14, 15

achieving social harmony and signalling the status of the giver. [30] Standpoints have diverged on the proper emphasis to be placed on conflict or consent in this relationship. A focus on the exercise of domination by elites in the changing urban environment has inclined many studies to represent charity as the imposition of order in an otherwise inherently chaotic and threatening situation. [31] Studies of voluntary provision of leisure, and work in the burgeoning area of the social history of medicine have also adopted this approach. [32] Others have laid greater emphasis on the degree of social consensus which charitable effort represented, dismissing the idea that the gift was inevitably laden with other concerns, and allowing for a nominalist reading where philanthropy was just what it claimed to be - open-hearted generosity. [33] Some have pointed to the existence of working class involvement in charity, to suggest that the 'peacable kingdom' of mid-Victorian Britain was not simply the result of authority and submission, but of shared values generated from below as well as above. [34]

This last interpretation has found its most forthright statement in the work of Frank Prochaska, whose recent syntheses to some extent represent the prevailing wisdom. [35] Prochaska's approach to philanthropy and class places the emphasis on consensus rather than conflict. The rise of class consciousness in the nineteenth century is accepted, and the use of philanthropy by the middle class to justify inequalities and elicit loyalty is acknowledged, as is some degree of rejectionism, hostility and dissembling on the part of recipients. [36] However, these aspects of voluntarism are set against the larger successes it achieved, in providing a forum for the working class to join '..together with

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30 Though this should not suggest a conceptual unanimity: for instance R.J.Morris explicitly rejects the 'deformation of the gift' as incompatible with the strategic and creative aspects of Leeds voluntarism, preferring to draw on Max Weber for his discussion of status, see *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit., pp.11-12, 204

31 For example M.J.D.Roberts 'Reshaping the Gift Relationship. The London Mendicity Society and the Suppression of Begging in England, 1818-1869', *International Review of Social History* xxxvi (1991) pp.201-231; Neil Evans 'Urbanisation, Elite Attitudes and Philanthropy: Cardiff, 1850-1914', *International Review of Social History* 27, (1982) p.292; Meg Whittle 'Philanthropy in Preston: The Changing Face of Charity in a 19th. century Provincial Town' unpublished Ph.D. University of Lancaster, (1990); and Richard H.Trainor *Black Country Elites: The Exercise of Authority in an Industrial Area, 1830-1900* (Oxford, 1993), though here philanthropy is discussed in a chapter entitled 'Coercion and Consensus'.

32 H.E.Meller *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914* (London, 1976); Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power, and the Poor in Eighteenth Century Bristol* (Cambridge, 1991) Ch.6; John V. Pickstone *Medicine and Industrial Society* (Manchester, 1985).

33 N.McCord 'Aspects of the Relief of Poverty in Early 19th Century Britain', *The Long Debate on Poverty* (IEA London, 1972) p.108

34 Brian Harrison 'Philanthropy and the Victorians' *Victorian Studies* IX, 4, (1966) pp.353-374, and the revised version of this article in his *Peacable Kingdom: Stability and Change in Modern Britain* (Oxford, 1983).

35 F.K.Prochaska *The Voluntary Impulse* (London, 1988); idem., 'Philanthropy', F.M.L.Thompson ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 3 Social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990).

36 Ibid., pp.369, 377, 379.

the higher classes in a common cause'. [37] Evidence for this extends beyond inter-familial kindness and neighbourhood mutual aid, to take in a huge range of activities in which 'charitable co-operation' occurred. These included special collections for disasters, provident societies, savings banks, lying-in and visiting charities, ragged and Sunday schools, Mechanics Institutes, mothers' meetings, foreign and domestic missions, Bible societies, clothing and boot clubs, libraries, temperance associations and the social purity movement. There are three ways in which a working class presence can be detected: firstly as small-subscribers, secondly as enthusiastic recipients and thirdly as workers, such as Bible women, mission visitors and collectors. [38] Inspiration for this involvement came from a yearning to improve social standing, and the result was social integration. Middle class motives of social control were present but ineffective, and anyway, insignificant given the 'shared values', such as a belief that '...fitness, decency and independence were wholesome', and a dislike of the undeserving poor. [39]

If the debate about class has provided the main focus for theorising philanthropy it has not been the exclusive one. Historians of religion offer an alternative, which emphasises belief, and the churches' commitment to social action in the period. The Evangelical revival of the early nineteenth century plays a central role in such interpretations, with connections made between the distinctive theology of the 'Saints' and the upsurge of voluntary effort and campaigning that characterised the period. [40] Activity by non-conformists has also been documented: philanthropic zeal provided a channel for the enthusiasm of the fast-growing Methodist movement, and acted as an outlet for the cultural goals of Old Dissent. [41] Some have presented religion as 'the crucial nexus of class formation', thus allowing a relationship between religious philanthropy and class interaction. [42]

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37 Ibid., p.366.
38 Ibid., pp.366-73.
39 Ibid., pp.366, 370-1.
40 Ian Bradley *The Call to Seriousness. The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (London, 1976) chs.4, 5, 6, 7 passim; Ford K.Brown *Fathers of the Victorians. The Age of Wilberforce* (Cambridge, 1961) chs.7, 9, 10; D.W.Bebbington *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain. A History From the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 1989) ch.4; Boyd Hilton *The Age of Atonement* (Oxford, 1988).
41 Bernard Semmel *The Methodist Revolution* (London, 1974); John Seed 'Unitarianism, political economy and the antinomies of liberal culture in Manchester, 1830-50', *Social History* 7, 1, (1982) pp.1-25.
42 John Seed 'Theologies of power: Unitarians and the social relations of religious discourse, 1800-50', R.J.Morris ed. *Class, Power and Social Structure* (Leicester, 1986); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall *Family Fortunes. Men and women of the English middle class, 1780-1850* (London, 1987) chs.2 & 3.

More typically the approach inclines to religion, if not as a 'stand-alone' influence, then at least predominant over material or 'social control' objectives: this might arise from the impact of prominent evangelicals, such as Thomas Chalmers, or be traced through linking phases of charitable effort to phases of religious intensity. [43] Here the important social fissure was not between classes, but between the faithful and unbelievers. The tide of secularization and urban apathy, which was dramatized by the 1851 Religious Census, provided the spur to charitable interventions, the prime goals of which were to proselytize and to secure the church's cultural influence. [44]

Another new perspective has been provided by feminist history. Concern was initially directed at those who dismissed women's charity work as the condescending interference of 'Lady Bountifuls', rather than according it the status of meaningful work. [45] The first important question is how should the qualitatively different scale of female philanthropy in the early nineteenth century be explained ? Current historiography gives particular credit to the Evangelical revival, with its emphasis on a woman's 'calling' and duty encouraging female charity. [46] Economic considerations were important too. Middle class families were increasingly wealthy enough for wives to disengage from business, and for widows and spinster daughters to draw an independent income; at the same time higher education and the professions were closed avenues. Men may have created voluntary societies, but it was women with the means, the time and the hunger for a social role who inexorably took on the running. [47] Another consideration, invoked for instance by Prochaska, is that peculiarly female qualities, such as care, sympathy, and domestic skills were seen as necessary for

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43 Olive Checkland *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1980) pp.6, 338, and passim for Chalmers; John Duthie 'Philanthropy and evangelism among Aberdeen seamen, 1814-1924' *The Scottish Historical Review* lxiii, 2, 176: (1984) p.171.

44 John Kent 'The Role of Religion in the Cultural Structure of the Later Victorian City' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th. series, 23, (1972) pp.153-173; for this approach to church missions etc., see D.Carter 'The Social and Political Influence of Bristol Churches 1830-1914' unpublished M.Litt thesis, University of Bristol (1971) ch.3; for the debate on the extent of secularization, C.Brown 'Faith in the City', *History Today* 40, (May, 1990) pp.41-47; idem., 'Did urbanization secularize Britain?', *Urban History Yearbook* (1988) pp.1-14.

45 Ann Summers 'A Home from Home - Women's Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century', Sandra Burman ed., *Fit Work For Women* (London, 1979) p.33; F.K.Prochaska *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England* (Oxford, 1980) pp.223-4.

46 Ibid., pp.1-17; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., pp.429-31; R.J.Morris 'Clubs, societies and associations', F.M.L.Thompson ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 3* op. cit., p.430; for female Evangelicalism, D.W.Bebbington op. cit., pp.128-9.

47 Ann Summers op. cit., pp.37-8; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., pp.422-3, 431-2

philanthropy. [48] Ann Summers used this approach in a more refined way, tracing the origin of home visiting to the desire of women to recreate the harmoniously regulated nature of mistress/servant relationships of the middle class household in the wider, socially fragmented, urban environment. [49] However, if the recovery of female charity was initially inspired by the worthy aim of dignifying the middle-class Victorian woman with a useful life, the project also had to confront its subjects' conservatism, anti-feminism and 'collusion with masculine power structures'. Marxist-feminist critics raise doubts abour a 'class-blind feminist analysis', which implicitly portrays women's social action as by its nature a route to emancipation. [50] The debate also entwines with current unease about the applicability of the notion of 'separate spheres' (of public and private) as the dominant category for theorizing gender identity. Do the works of propagandists such as Hannah More indicate a lived reality of women 'severely circumscribed' in their domestic sphere ? [51] Or, as Linda Colley has argued, was the impact of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars to both accentuate gender difference *and* provide new opportunities for women's public presence ? [52] Is it appropriate to regard the Victorian woman as a 'bird in a gilded cage', or is this image of suppressed aspiration actually the product of modern assumptions and the rhetoric of an earlier generation of suffragists ? And if so, did the access to public life which philanthropy offered really have a progessive, liberating effect ? [53] There is therefore a debate within the literature over the tension between the conservative and emancipatory aspects of charity. [54] Most would accept that philanthropy was one strand of female activity from which feminism was to emerge, and some give particular weight to the cultural, social and administrative impact of charity work. [55] Others see

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48 F.K.Prochaska *Women and Philanthropy* op. cit. pp.3, 7-8; Patricia Hollis *Women in Public - The Women's Movement 1850-1900* (London, 1979) p.223.

49 Ann Summers op. cit., pp.36-41.

50 See for example Johanna M.Smith's review of Jane Lewis's *Women and Social Action in Victorian and Edwardian England* (1991) in *Victorian Studies* 36, 2, (1993) pp.227-9, from which the quotes are taken.

51 Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., pp.167-72, quote, p.170.

52 Linda Colley *Britons : Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London, 1992), pp.237-81; see also Joan B.Landes *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca, 1988) pp.117-21.

53 Amanda Vickery 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres ? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History' *The Historical Journal* xxxvi, (1993) pp.383-414; Mary Clare Martin 'Women and Philanthropy in Walthamstow and Leyton, 1740-1870' *The London Journal* 19, 2, (1994) pp.119-150.

54 For an early statement of the contradictions inherent in evaluating the links between female philanthropy and emancipation, see Ann Summers op. cit., pp.57-61.

55 Olive Banks *Becoming a Feminist: the social origins of first wave feminism* (Brighton, 1986) uses philanthropic activity as one category for inclusion of women in femininst biographical dictionary, on which this work is based; for a positive account of the influence of philanthropy on the suffrage movement, see F.K.Prochaska *Women and Philanthropy* op. cit., Conclusion.

philanthropy as achieving little more than a shifting of the boundaries of gendered behaviour, preferring to locate the emergence of modern feminism more precisely in the demographic factors which produced 'surplus' women, and thus forced the issues of female employment and property onto the political agenda. [56] Indeed, argument about the contribution female philanthropy could make to improving women's conditions had been a feature of public debate in the late nineteenth century, so we need not be surprised at the lack of historiographical concord. [57]

b) Towards a framework for interpretation

What sort of guidance can these various approaches offer for a case-study of voluntarism in a chosen city ? The first consideration must be that new directions in social history and the history of medicine have altered the landscape considerably. A good deal of recent research has cast doubt upon the 'passage to modernity' model of inexorable progress from monastic to endowed charity to voluntary societies, to the optimal arrangement of welfare state. On the one hand we now have a more diverse notion of late medieval and early modern charity than that suggested by Jordan. [58] This embraces not only the provisions made by the gilds, but also acknowledges the persistence of casual offering to beggars, hospitality, funeral alms, and mutualist activites like charity ales. [59] Work on responses to dearth has broadened our notion of charity to include the fixing of prices and the provision of grain in times of shortage. [60] Investigation of the Old Poor Law has thoroughly overturned Jordan's more extravagant claims for private charity's supremacy over public provision,

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56 Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., pp.436, 453.

57 The writings of Isabella Ford illustrate the socialist/feminist attack on the conservative and repressive aspects of women's philanthropy, see June Hannam *Isabella Ford* (Oxford, 1989) p.51; for a more sympathetic account of the philanthropists' retreat before the 'Masculine officialism' of collectivism, see Frank Prochaska *The Voluntary Impulse* op. cit., pp.72-4, 89.

58 For example the 'failure' of monastic charity on the eve of the Reformation now appears much less certain, see Felicity Heal *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990) ch.6, and Barbara Harvey *Living and Dying in England 1100-1540* (Oxford, 1993) ch.1.

59 Miri Rubin *Charity and Community in Medieval Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1987); N.P.Tanner *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich* (Toronto, 1984); J.J.Scarisbrick *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford, 1984) ch.2; Judith Bennett 'Conviviality and Charity in Medieval and Early Modern England', *Past and Present* 134 (1992) pp.19-41; Ben R.McRee 'Charity and Gild Solidarity in Late Medieval England' *Journal of British Studies* 32, 3, (1993) pp.195-225; Felicity Heal 'The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England' and Susan Brigden 'Religion and Social Obligation in Early Sixteenth-Century London', both in *Past and Present* 102, (1984) pp.66-93.

60 John Walter 'The social economy of dearth in early modern England' in John Walter & Roger Schofield *Famine, disease and the social order in early modern society* (Cambridge, 1989); the notion of 'social economy' is akin to 'moral economy'..

and his failure to adjust his calculation of the value of endowments for inflation has now been exhaustively discussed. [61]

At the same time, work on care of the elderly and the Old Poor Law's medical services both force a re-appraisal of the Victorian era. [62] Now it seems that in these two respects people were relatively well-served in the 18th century, and the period between the Poor Law Amendment in 1834 and the Liberal welfare reforms is most notable for its meanness and restraint of public provision, rather than its place in the 'march of progress'. Finally, the 1980s saw historians of the New Right challenge the characterisation of the post-war Welfare State as the ideal culmination of a long evolution towards successful social planning. Instead it was an aberration, born of a specific political conjuncture, which had fostered dependency on the 'nipple of state maternalism'. [63]

This more critical approach to teleological assumptions has various implications for thinking about philanthropy. On the one hand it has favoured those who take a generous approach to the subject: Prochaska's work for instance adopts the stance of rehabilitating a theme either ignored hitherto, or treated with condescension. [64] On the other, it has dislodged linear explanations of 'welfare' history in favour of the search for variegated systems of relief and a richer understanding of the interplay between legislation and private effort. [65] Continuities over the long term are now on the research agenda. For instance, in discussing the treatment of the elderly through time Peter Laslett calls for an appreciation of '...attitudes we have inherited and must still largely adhere to since they could be as old as humanity itself...'. [66]

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61 Paul Slack *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1988) ch.8; W.Bittle & R.Todd Lane 'Inflation and Philanthropy in England: A Re-assessment of W.K.Jordan's Data' *Economic History Review* 2nd. series, xxix, (1976) pp.203-210; J.F.Hadwin 'Deflating Philanthropy', and comments by D.C.Coleman and J.D.Gould in *Economic History Review* 2nd. series, xxxi, 1, (1978) pp.105-120.

62 David Thompson op. cit.; idem. 'The Decline of Social Welfare: Falling State Support for the Elderly since Early Victorian Times', *Ageing and Society* 4, 4, (1984) pp.451-482; Irvine Loudon *Medical Care and the General Practitioner 1750-1850* (Oxford, 1986) ch.11.

63 Correlli Barnett *The Audit of War: the illusion and reality of Britain as a great nation* (London, 1986) p.304.

64 F.K.Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., p.359.

65 See for example Marjorie K.McIntosh 'Local Responses to the Poor in Late Medieval and Tudor England' *Continuity and Change* 3, 2, (1988) pp.209-245, where the continuities in parish relief between the dissolution of the religious fraternities and the early Tudor Poor Law are stressed, (p.230).

66 Peter Laslett 'Preface' Margaret Pelling and Richard M.Smith ed. *Life, Death and the Elderly, Historical Perspectives* (London, 1991) p.xv; concern for continuities is reflected in the time-span of this collection, which ranges from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, as do other works of this type, such as Lindsay Granshaw and Roy Porter ed. *The Hospital in History* (London, 1990) and Jonathan Barry and Colin Jones ed., *Medicine and Charity Before the Welfare State* (London, 1991)

Of equal importance to the re-orientation of histories of medicine and charity is the more fundamental questioning of nineteenth century social history's basic theoretical assumptions. Historians of the so-called 'linguistic turn' have forcefully challenged correlations between a notional working class identity arising from 'steam power and the cotton mill', and the ordinary person's subjective understanding of the social order. [67] It is now argued that radical politics up to and including Chartism were not manifestations of a new class consciousness but the culmination of a dissenting political tradition stretching back to the 18th century. [68] Revisionists propose that we go 'beyond class' to understand social identities in terms of a broadly based populism. [69]

As for the workers, so for the middle class. Recent years have brought two attempts at a synthetic treatment of the 'making of the English middle class', both of which chart the emergence of middle-class identity, though for one this occurred in the late 17th century, and for the other the late 18th. [70] Is it then really possible to talk of a homogeneous class consciousness ? Some have wondered whether the new gender roles and the domestic ideology that Davidoff and Hall discerned were really peculiar to the middle classes; others ask whether there were perhaps two distinct middle class identities, one metropolitan the other provincial, while others see 'making' as a constant process, punctuated by the cyclical 'rediscovery' of urban bourgeois values. [71] Old certainties about the ascendancy of a unitary 'entrepreneurial ideal' have also been undermined by economic historians. Work on tax and probate reveals that the wealth generated by revolutionised industries was always less than old money, in land, finance and public office, while the 'gradualist' re-appraisal of the chronology of industrialisation now highlights regional variety and the importance of the

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67 For recent reviews of these developments, see Adrian Wilson 'A critical portrait of social history' idem. ed., *Rethinking Social History English society 1570-1920 and its interpretation* (Manchester, 1993).

68 Gareth Stedman Jones 'Re-thinking Chartism' *Languages of Class: studies in English working-class history 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983).

69 Patrick Joyce *Visions of the People. Industrial England and the question of class 1848-1914* (Cambridge, 1991)

70 Peter Earle *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London 1660-1730* (London, 1989); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit.

71 Amanda Vickery op. cit., pp.393-401; Dror Wahrman 'National Society, communal culture: an argument about the recent historiography of eighteenth-century Britain' *Social History* 17, 1, (1992) pp.43-72; see also Wahrman's 'Virtual representation: parliamentary reporting and languages of class in the 1790s', *Past and Present* 136, (1992) pp.83-113, which applies the 'languages of class' methodology to the middle class; Jonathan Barry 'Bourgeois Collectivism ? Urban Association and the Middling Sort' in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks ed. *The Middling Sort of People. Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (London, 1994) p.112.

service sector. [72] Orthodoxies of class formation have therefore been attacked on two fronts, firstly by a reconsideration of how identity is constituted, and secondly by revised understanding of the material changes that underpinned both Marxist and liberal accounts.

What does all this mean for philanthropy ? Firstly, there must be careful scrutiny of existing templates which relate it to narratives of social change that are potentially redundant. Secondly, whiggish assumptions of charity as precursor to welfare state must be avoided, without lapsing into a new variety of presentism: Frank Prochaska comes perilously close to this, celebrating the resurgent philanthropy of the 1980s (Live Aid, sponsored walks etc.) as 'one of Britain's most distinctive traditions'. [73] Thirdly, there is a strong case for drawing the parameters of the subject according to how contemporaries understood it, rather than as it was construed by later historians with specific agendas.

So, what is the most plausible definition of philanthropy from which to work ? Jordan, bound by his methodology of quantifying charitable gifts in probate, equated early modern philanthropy with endowment. Owen, with the destination of the welfare state in mind, concentrated his fire on health, education and poor relief, and was subsequently castigated for failing to place Victorian philanthropy in its broad context of religious endeavour and social reform movements. [74] Others favour an all-embracing definition. [75] Prochaska takes this approach to its most extreme:: 'It is suggestive to think of the history of philanthropy broadly as the history of kindness'. [76] In this reading it can be viewed in its primary form in the family, where the care of relatives and dependants is founded on that same feeling of benevolence. It can also be found in working class neighbourhoods, where community solidarity and sharing also emanate from that same basic impulse of generosity. This justifies his subsequent argument, already mentioned, that the

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72 Key works are W.D.Rubinstein ed. *Elites and the Wealthy in Modern British History* (Brighton, 1987), P.J.Cain and A.G.Hopkins *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion 1688-1914* (London, 1993) chs. 3 & 4, N.F.R.Crafts *British Economic Growth during the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford, 1985), E.A.Wrigley *Continuity, chance and change. The character of the industrial revolution in England* (Cambridge, 1988), C.H.Lee *The British Economy since 1700: a Macro-economic Perspective* (1986); for a critical survey of 'gradualism', see Maxine Berg and Pat Hudson 'Rehabilitating the Industrial Revolution', *Economic History Review* 2nd. series, xlv, 1, (1992) pp.24-50.

73 Frank Prochaska *The Voluntary Impulse* op. cit. pp.6, 86, though, to be fair, the brief of the series in which the book appears is to examine the past roots of present-day issues.

74 Brian Harrison 'Philanthropy and the Victorians' op. cit.

75 Ibid., see the version in *Peacable Kingdom* op. cit., pp.220-1.

76 Frank Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., p.360.

prevalence of working class charity, and inter/intra-class charity, militates against a reading of philanthropy as a power relationship or as a weapon of social control. Rather, it was a manifestation of social solidarity, with rich and poor striving jointly towards a shared vision of a better world.

Prochaska's re-working of the nominalist approach creates a vast subject area, but it is interesting that the fate of the old endowed charities is not accorded a place. Indeed with few exceptions, the charitable endowment - ancient and modern - is absent from the post-Owen historiography. [77] Partly this is because accounts which privilege class aspiration as the dynamo of philanthropic effort cannot integrate discussion of the charitable trust in any obvious way; partly, (and to some extent in consequence) because case studies of philanthropy have dwelt on cities which experienced dramatic growth in the early nineteenth century, and thus were unusual in *not* having a significant number of endowments. [78] There is therefore an inconsistency and arbitrariness in the way the theme has been defined.

This makes it essential to pin down the meaning of the word 'philanthropy' more tightly. According to the etymologists the earliest usage in Ancient Greece, in Plato for example, is of a word that signified the love of the gods for humanity, so the notion of a relationship between powerful and powerless has been present from the start. [79] As it diffused through classical civilisations to become a part of West European vocabulary, from about 500 AD, it was possible to distinguish four meanings: 'first, a philosophical abstraction; second a political attribute; third, charity directed to the individual in want; fourth, philanthropy expressed in organised institutions'.[80] By the eighteenth century Dr Johnson's 'Dictionary of the English Language' offered 'love of mankind; good nature', while the French Encyclopedia coupled a recognition of philanthropy as a moral virtue, an imitation of divine love, with some healthy Enlightenment scepticism: 'The second

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77 There is one specialist study, R.Tompson *The Charity Commission and the Age of Reform* (London, 1979); for discussions which integrate endowment into broader accounts, Anne Digby *British Welfare Policy* (London, 1989) p.87, P.Searby 'The Relief of the Poor in Coventry, 1830-63', *The Historical Journal* 20, 2, (1977) pp.356-8.

78 Brian Harrison *Peacable Kingdom* op. cit., p.229 swiftly dismisses the 'aristocratic institutions' of 'ancient charities' from his analysis since they were incompatible with the Victorian philanthropist's 'overriding concern for the dignity of the individual'; R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit., pp.169-70, fleetingly describes Leeds' endowments, though he does acknowledge the significance of the Tory/Anglican 'Pious Uses Trustees' as precursors to the nineteenth century voluntary society.

79 D.Constantelos *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare* (New Jersey, 1968) chs. 1 & 2; Greek root: φιλανθρωπια.

80 Ibid., p.18.

kind is where one ingratiates oneself with others to please them, capture them and govern them. In this last practice, so common amongst polite society, it is not others who one loves, but oneself.' [81]

The word 'charity' has a rather different semantic history, although in contemporary usage it is almost interchangeable with 'philanthropy'. [82] It derives from the Latin 'caritas', whose root is 'carus' meaning 'dear'. [83] The Bible established the word as a moral sentiment, love, in the sense of mutual caring, though the feeling was initially distinguished from the act: '...though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor..and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing' (*Corinthians ch.xiii*). Common to both the Christian and Islamic traditions is the idea of charity as an exchange of wealth between have and have-not, whose importance was bound up with the chance of salvation it offered the donor. [84] In England the religious connotation gradually made way for an understanding which emphasized social obligation instead, as in Francis Bacon's injunction in 1625 to 'Defer not charities till death, for certainly he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than his own'. [85] By the early 19th century the noun 'charity' would have been understood variously as the virtue of Christian love, familial tenderness, 'liberality to the poor', and - in its precise legal sense - as an institution established by endowment. [86]

So, both philanthropy and charity are loose terms which have changed their meaning over time, and can bear a *range* of meanings at the *same* time. By drawing selectively on these meanings the historian is entitled to approach the subject in the narrow sense of a power relationship between rich and poor - of a deed which principally benefits the giver. Equally, the undifferentiated and potentially ahistorical 'love of mankind' reading can justify seeing the hand of charity in family support and neighbourliness. Is it possible to strike a balance between the former interpretation, which is central yet confined, and the latter, which is conceptually unmanageable - for how could a 'history of kindness' ever be written ?

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[81] Dr. Johnson *Dictionary of the English Language* (London, 1831), entry under 'philanthropy'; *Encyclopedie ou Dictionnaire Raisonne Des Sciences, Des Arts et Des Metiers Tome Douzieme* (1765), entry under 'philanthropie'; I thank Tamizan Savill for her translation.

[82] F.K.Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., p.360.

[83] Raymond Williams *Keywords* (Glasgow, 1976) pb. edn. pp.45-6.

[84] References to charity in the *Koran* may be found at xxx 38, 39, and lxiv 16; it's interesting to note that the Arabic word 'sedaka', now translated as alms/charity originally meant 'justice', while the Hebrew word 'tsedaka' means 'righteousness'.

[85] Francis Bacon 'Of Riches', *Essays* (1625).

[86] See Dr Johnson op. cit., entry under 'charity'; I discuss the legal definition of 'charity' below, in Chapter.3 a).

To achieve this we must put aside the notion of philanthropy as a distinct tradition, and the essentialist reading of charity as a feeling, and ask how contemporaries perceived the world of voluntary giving. Here I am going to begin delineating the subject area of the thesis. I will argue that the very broad defintion adopted by Prochaska does not do justice to nineteenth century complexities, although in other respects the accepted parameters of the subject have been too narrow.

Firstly, what of the old adage 'Charity begins at home', and its implication that inter-familial care was a type of philanthropy ? [87] Is there any particular reason why the support of a relative, close or distant, should be viewed primarily as a philanthropic relationship ? Surely obligation was the main factor ? That at least was the position as far as the Poor Law was concerned, because until the National Assistance Act of 1948 it was actually possible for the authorities to take individuals to court for failure to support certain categories of relative who would otherwise be their responsibility. [88] Gerontologists have shown that the high levels of out-relief for the aged under the Old Poor Law reveal that rather than the parish picking up the few whose families could not or would not accept legal liability for dependents, it was actually quite normal for the community at large to shoulder this burden of care through the rates. [89] Pushing back further in time a contractual basis for retirement has been detected in the operations of medieval manorial courts. [90] There seems little reason to privilege philanthropy as the motor of familial care arrangements, when custom, inter-generational life-cycle dependency, community norms and mutual obligation were also in play.

Secondly, what of the argument that philanthropy was not simply a power relationship between rich and poor, but was also a common feature of working class life ? There is no doubt that the working classes were proactively involved in such areas as the Sunday schools and adult education, not to mention temperance; it must also be the case that many of the people who contributed to

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87 Proposed by Brian Harrison *Peacable Kingdom* op. cit., p.220, and developed by Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., pp.360-362.

88 M.A.Crowther 'Family responsibility and State Responsibility in Britain before the Welfare State', *The Historical Journal* 25, 1, (1982) pp.131-145; David Thomson 'I am not my father's keeper': Families and the Elderly in Nineteenth Century England', *Law and History Review* 2, (1984) pp.267-286.

89 See note 62, David Thomson.

90 Richard M.Smith 'The Manorial Court and the Elderly Tenant in Late Medieval England' in Margaret Pelling and Richard M.Smith ed. op. cit.

church collections for a charitable purpose, or joined a Band of Hope procession, were not especially well off. [91] But can we classify these instances along with the 'philanthropy' of neighbourliness, such as the care of needy members of the community by home-visiting, a whip-round in the pub, or sharing of food and clothing ? [92] The verdict of urban historians who have approached the problem from the study of working class communities is that the processes at work in neighbourhood sharing were more complex than a simple benevolent response to disaster. Reciprocity and obligation were more important, in what was really a social mechanism developed in small residential communities to ease the stresses of rapid urban growth.[93] Help for a neighbour was not simply an act of compassion, but motivated by the awareness that soon it might be the giver requiring help from the erstwhile recipient; this was mutual aid, not philanthropy, and its reprocity tangible, not spiritual.

A distinction between mutuality and charity was well understood by contemporaries. Engels' withering attack on bourgeois philanthropy was noted above; shortly afterwards he observes:

> 'As to the efficiency of this philanthropy ... the poor are relieved much more by the poor than by the bourgeiosie; and such relief given by an honest proletarian who knows himself what it is to be hungry, for whom sharing his scanty meal is really a sacrifice, ... such help has a wholly different ring to it from the carelessly tossed alms of the luxurious bourgeoisie'. [94]

What we have here are two kinds of philanthropy, the first genuinely moral because the giver is actually depriving himself through his gift, and the second immoral because the giver can very easily spare his donation, with no real hardship to himself. The social and cultural meaning was different.

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91 See below, Chapter 10.

92 Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., p.363, criticises Ellen Ross 'Survival Networks: Women's Neighbourhood Sharing in London before World War I', *History Workshop Journal* 15, (1983) pp.4-27, for failing to acknowledge the philanthropic element in 'neighbourhood sharing'; this is an injustice to Ross, who specifically points out that: 'Middle-class commentators who noticed and admired the mutual aid of poor districts tended to view it as a form of charity...', p.19.

93 Ibid.; for the survival of neighbourhood solidarity see Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly 'Neighbourhood Social Change in West Eurpean Cities, Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries', *International Review of Social History* 38, (1993) pp.1-30, and Bill Bramwell 'Public space and local communities: the example of Birmingham, 1840-1880', Gerry Kearns and Charles J.Withers ed. *Urbanising Britain: Essays on Class and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1991); see also Michael Anderson *Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century* Lancashire (Cambridge, 1971) who stresses the importance of family and kinship networks to reciprocal relations in the working-class community.

94 F.Engels op. cit., p.304.

This distinction is also observed in another source relating to the most formalised mutualist structure, the friendly society. These are usually understood as working class self-help organisations where members purchased health insurance and death benefit by monthly subscription, but they also had a rich ceremonial life, which included initiation and teaching of values. [95] The largest national friendly society, the Ancient Order of Foresters urged its members to practice *benevolence*, which was defined as: '...a kind act, performed to one in necessity, without any accompanying feeling of selfishness'. This was distinct from *kindness* where a man '...shared that which was not necessary for himself', and different again from *charity* where a man gave '...out of his abundance what he could have well spared'. [96] No unitary definition of philanthropy as kindness can do justice to these nuanced conceptions of the gift relationship.

c) Subject area and methodology

We can now draw together some of these themes and move towards defining the subject area, guided by the way contemporaries perceived philanthropy and 'benevolence'. *Fig. 1.1* (over) sets out the relevant categories, establishing first that the voluntary arena was bounded by the state and the market.

For reasons given above the familial care of dependent relatives is placed in the private sector, and here too are the market choices which people could opt for as alternatives to voluntary institutions. Rich and poor alike could pay for schooling, at least until the campaign against the dame schools removed alternatives to state and charity provision in the 1870s, and medical treatment was also available to suit the patient's pocket. [97] The middle class solution to the insecurities of old age was to live on investment income, or, increasingly, to purchase life assurance. [98] The state's contribution was not limited to the Poor Law, but also took in the Charity Commissions and a raft of legislation from 1793 to encourage the formation of friendly societies,

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95 P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England, 1815-1875* (Manchester, 1961).

96 *Formularies and Lectures of the Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society* (n.d., based on the 1857 Formularies) p.50; for a similar line taken by the Oddfellows, Trygve R.Tholfsen *Working-Class Radicalism in Mid-Victorian England* (London, 1976) p.295.

97 Dame schools, see Philip W.Gardner *The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England* (London, 1984); private medicine, Irvine Loudon op. cit.

98 R.J.Morris 'The Middle Class and the Property Cycle during the Industrial Revolution', T.C.Smout ed. *The Search for Wealth and Stability* (London, 1979).

savings banks and building societies. The education grant, which started in 1833, had only a tiny impact on the funding of schools initially, but from the 1850s a series of Youthful Offenders Acts instigated state funding for ragged schools and reformatories, then in 1870 came Forster's Act which established school boards, and paradoxically triggered a final burst of charity spending on denominational schools.

Fig.1.1 Categories of Voluntarism in the Nineteenth Century

STATE		**VOLUNTARISM**		**PRIVATE**
	Endowed Charity	**Voluntary Societies/**	**Mutual Aid**	
Poor Law Union		**Subscriber Institutions**	Neighbourhood Sharing	Family Obligation
	Almshouses			
	Endowed Schools	Missions		
Friendly Society registry	Loan Monies	Visiting		**Market:**
	Doles/Gifts	Hospitals	Friendly Societies	Health
	Sermons	Schools		Education
		Homes		
		Campaigns		Unearned/Rentier Income
Charity Commissions				
		Building Societies		Life Assurance
		Savings Banks		
Schools Acts		Annuitant Societies		
		Penny Banks		
		Hierarchical Societies		

People clearly understood 'charity' to refer to institutions established by endowment; there is no justification for omitting a full discussion of the fate of endowed charity in the nineteenth century from this account. As pointed out above, the reason for the disappearance of this theme from studies of philanthropy is that in many cities the old charitable trusts did not make a great contribution to the relief of poverty. *Table 1.1 a)* (over) gives some comparative figures drawn from the findings of the Brougham Commission, the first comprehensive Charity Commission reporting between 1819

and 1837: compare for example the income from Bradford's and Liverpool's endowments with those in Bristol to contrast the urban experience. *Table 1.1 b)* suggests why the national picture cannot be properly comprehended unless account of this old-style philanthropy is taken. It shows that in the last year of the Brougham Commission the amount generated by endowments towards social spending was approximately 25% of state welfare expenditure. This is an absolute minimum, because many of the charities investigated earlier on had reformed corrupt or incompetent management and vastly increased yield, to the extent that their income had almost doubled by the 1870s when the next Commission reported. Whether the relative value of private to public spending was nearer to a half than a quarter is not that important - the key point is that it was significant enough to still be of central concern in the history of philanthropy.

Table 1.1 Endowed charity in comparative perspective.

1.1 a) Income p.a. of endowed charities in selected cities, 1837.

London *	£ 120,846
Bristol	£ 19,874
Manchester	£ 12,513
Coventry	£ 10,367
Birmingham	£ 5,677
Bradford	£ 894
Liverpool	£ 509

1.1 b) Endowed charity and Public expenditure, England and Wales, 1837.

Poor Law Expenditure	£ 4,045,000
Education Grant	£ 20,000
	£ 4,095,000
Brougham Commission, 1837	£ 1,199,223
Charity Commission, 1867-76	£ 2,198,464

* *includes Westminster*

Source: Brougham Commission, 1819-1837, PP 1843 xvi, pp.544-8, 544-5, xvii, pp.488-91, 666-7; Charity Commission, 1867-76, PP1877 lxvi, pp.34-5, Table III; Public Expenditure: B.R.Mitchell *British Historical Statistics* p.605; PP 1837-8 xxxviii p.325.

Moving towards the 'Voluntary Societies/Institutions' category, we now arrive at the themes which have been most typically identified with 'philanthropy' hitherto. Firstly the voluntary societies such as the domestic and foreign church missions, parochial home-visiting groups, 'Dorcas' societies for pregnant and nursing mothers, and campaigning groups such as abolitionists or temperance societies; secondly the subscriber charities which supported institutions, such as hospitals, dispensaries, schools, and homes for orphans, prostitutes or the disabled.

Philanthropy is distinguished from mutual aid using the Engels/Foresters formula, which classifies the former as a transaction between have and have-not, and the latter as giving between those of similar income level. Neighbourhood sharing was a system of community behaviour by which a resident's visibility in the public life of the streets guaranteed a minimal level of mutual support; it may well have been expressed in a compassionate way, but it was essentially driven by enlightenened self-interest. It will not feature in this study, which limits itself to formal voluntarism. [99]

In contrast to this informal mutualism was the activity of the friendly societies. It is interesting to note that these most ubiquitous voluntary associations have been strangely neglected by historians whose brief should logically have included them. [100] In defence of this lacuna it should be noted that published research on this form of working class organisation is not extensive, particularly in comparison to the wealth of material on trade unions. [101] Another impediment has been the tendency for historians to employ the potentially anachronistic concept of 'self-help' as their chief category of analysis, thus accentuating the differences between friendly societies and other forms of voluntarism. [102] A third tendency has been for historians to marginalise their impact by associating

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99 The reason for excluding informal mutuality is that its explication requires a quite different methodology to that adopted here. Detailed work on the census is needed to reconstruct kinship and other networks within the working class community, while the characterisitics of sharing are deduced from autobiographies, court records, oral accounts and visitors surveys, see Ellen Ross op. cit.

100 Frank Prochaska *The Voluntary Impulse* op. cit. p.7, excises them on the grounds of 'managing the subject', then proceeds to conflate voluntarism with his broadly defined concept of philanthropy; R.J.Morris offers only a cursory treatment in 'Clubs, societies and associations', F.M.L.Thompson ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 3 Social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990) pp.399-400, 416-7; works which *do* integrate friendly societies into broader surveys are Lord Beveridge *Voluntary Action* op. cit., Geoffrey Finalyson *Citizen, State and Social Welfare* op. cit., and Hilary Marland *Medicine and society in Wakefield and Huddersfield, 1780-1870* (Cambridge, 1987).

101 P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England, 1815-1875* (Manchester, 1961) remains the standard text.

102 idem. *Self-Help, Voluntary Associations in the 19th Century* (London, 1973); the *OED* Vol VIII, Part II gives 1831 as its first citation of the usage, and of course it is typically associated with Samuel Smiles' eponymous work of 1859; however, the recognisable friendly society form has been traced to the late seventeenth century, and it should also be noted that the accepted

them with the so-called 'labour aristocracy' and treating them as peculiar to the ideology and social patterns of the elite of the working class. [103] Nonetheless, friendly societies and other types of savings institutions, such as building societies and trustee savings banks, clearly merit inclusion in any survey of institutionalised voluntary provision. In the course of subsequent discussion I will consider further whether they were similar to or different from other voluntary associations.

This differentiated model of voluntarism provides a conceptual framework for the thesis, but how did it relate to the institutional structures of the provincial city ? Firstly the role of the parish and the non-conformist chapel was crucial. Not only did they form the nucleii of many voluntary societies and schools, but they were also responsible for trusteeship of the majority of endowments. Indeed the declining enthusiasm of donors to create new endowed charities surely has a lot to do with the simultaneous decline of the parish as an administrative unit, eased aside by poor law unions, borough police forces, corporation highway committees and so on. The Corporation itself managed most of the wealthiest endowments until the 1830s when its purported malfeasance and incompetence was used as ammunition by the Municipal Corporation reformers, and they were wrested away from the Corporation, and taken over by a new group of Charity Trustees. Gilds were the other major influence. Friendly societies emerged just at the point gild controls and membership went into terminal decline, and it will be shown that there are major similarities between gild and friendly society articles of association. The decline of gild sociability also opened the way for the early and mid-18th century voluntary charities of the middling sorts, which raised money for lying-in women, and for apprenticeships, couching their appeals in the language of mutual solidarity, and adopting the familiar convivial pattern of gild celebrations. Pubs remained at the heart of friendly society life, but were dropped by all but a few old charities in the early 19th century, when philanthropic meetings transferred either to actual institutions - schools, hospitals, or to respectable public rooms and halls.

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meaning of the term, 'providing for oneself without assistance from others', is quite the reverse of friendly society practice, which was predicated upon mutual assistance.

103 G.Crossick *An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society* (London, 1978) pp.174-198.

The aim of the thesis is therefore to explore endowed charity, philanthropic voluntarism and mutuality within the context of urban structures, and respond to some of the claims and debates arising from this brief tour of the historiography. Chapter 2 introduces the setting of Bristol, highlighting distinctive features of its society and economy in the nineteenth century. The first main section deals with endowed charity, and here the goal will be to explore an aspect of voluntarism that has been virtually ignored. The Bristol case-study will provide an empirical base from which to interrogate the assertion that '...by 1800 endowed trusts had ceased to be the principal method of giving to charity, either in number or in value'. [104] Chapter 3 presents a quantification of Bristol's trusts and an assessment of trends in giving; the aim is to furnish statistical evidence of when, why, and to what extent endowed trusts went into decline in the period. Chapter 4 deals with the political tussle to control the city's charity funds in the era of municipal reform, and poses new questions about the role of party politics in the chronology of decline. Chapter 5 asks whether the changing role of the parish contributed to the decline of endowment.

Section II focuses on mutuality, with Chapter 6 analysing the growth, functions and social significance of friendly societies. What was their origin ? What motivated friendly society membership ? How extensive was their coverage, and how successful were they ? Chapter 7 considers the mutualist rhetoric of eighteenth century voluntarism, then deals with what may be broadly defined as philanthropic provident organisations - in other words those run *for*, not *by* the working class. I will ask why this type of friendly society had only limited success, and in the case of building societies and savings banks seek to identify the beneficiaries.

In Section III the voluntary charities are discussed, commencing with an empirical survey in Chapter 8 which aims to establish a chronology of formations. Chapter 9 examines the finances of philanthropic societies and institutions, and asks what return they achieved for their supporters and for recipients. Chapter 10 addresses the theme of voluntary charity's social meaning, and here I will use the case-study to discuss some of the claims outlined above for charity's role in class and gender relations, and to explore further its political significance.

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[104] Geoffrey Finlayson op. cit., p.59.

Chapter 2

Bristol: the context

Introduction

Bristolians in the nineteenth century liked to claim that their town had '...long stood at the head of all other cities, for the number, magnitude and diversity of its benevolent institutions'. [1] There was substance behind this boast. In the period 1480 to 1660 the sums endowed to charity by Bristol merchants were second only to London amongst English towns. [2] It had been the second provincial town, after Winchester, to open an Infirmary (1737). [3] Its name was linked to philanthropists whose reputation spread far beyond the city, such as Edward Colston, Richard Reynolds, Hannah More, Mary Carpenter and George Muller. Bristol offers the historian the opportunity for a case-study of an established city, with a plethora of institutions to examine, yet unlike London, not too many to forbid the possibility of a total picture. It has certain distinct features, such as its religious variety, and its political characteristics, while its economic development makes it a useful contrast to the 'shock cities' of the industrial revolution. This chapter will briefly survey these features, limiting itself to material which will be required to contextualise the later study.

a) Demography

Bristol was an old city, which from the late Middle Ages had ranked amongst the largest provincial towns: second in 1377, second in the 1520s, third in 1662, and second in 1700. [4] In the nineteenth century it slipped back to fourth in 1801, and sixth in 1861, now dwarfed by Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham. Its population growth 1800-70 was slightly in excess of the rate for England and Wales as a whole, though in the 1820s and 1860s it was substantially higher, and in the 1840s lower. [5] Set against the average for the 72 largest U.K. towns this growth was distinctly less impressive; it exceeded the average urban growth rate only

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1 *Matthews's Directory* (1841) p.295.

2 W.K.Jordan 'The Forming of the Charitable Institutions of the West of England' *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* I, 8, (Philadelphia, 1960), pp.8, 13: eg. London: £1,889,211, Bristol: £92,042, Norwich: £53,018.

3 G.Munro Smith *A History of the Bristol Royal Infirmary* (Bristol, 1917) pp.5-9.

4 W.G.Hoskins *Local History in England* (London, 1959) Appendix 1; E.Anthony Wrigley 'Urban growth and agricultural change: England and the continent in the early modern period', P.Borsay ed. *The Eighteenth Century Town: A Reader in English Urban History* (London, 1990), pp.42-3, Table I.

5 H.A.Shannon and E.Grebenick *The Population of Bristol* (Cambridge, 1943) p.8.

in the 1860s, and even in the expansive 1820s lagged behind (Bristol: 22.7%, 72 towns: 32%). [6] Population in the parishes of the old city grew until the mid-century, and from the 1860s experienced a net outflow as the central area was given over more to business. Increase was initially more marked in the 'concentric ring' of surrounding suburbs, such as wealthy Clifton and Kingsdown, and working class Bedminster; these areas were incorporated in 1835. From the mid-century the area of most dynamic growth was the eastern suburbs, such as St George, Easton and Stapleton, finally incorporated in 1897. [7]

Comparison of Bristol's age structure to that of England and Wales shows the population to be slightly older. In 1841 for instance the city had 33.2% aged 0-14, 60% aged 15-59 and 6.8% aged 60 and over, while nationally the figures were 35.4%, 57.2%, and 7.3%. [8] There was therefore nothing obviously exceptional in the level of dependency of the non-working population. However, as a transport hub, Bristol did have a large proportion of migrants. The 1851 census reported 49% of inhabitants to have been born outside the town itself, of which the majority (80%) came from outside Gloucestershire. [9] It was thought that a substantial number of migrants were transitory, working temporarily in the city, then moving on. [10] Of these the Irish were significant: Engels claimed 24,000 were settled in the city in 1845, though the 1851 census recorded only 4,761 out of a population of 137,328. [11] Whatever the true number, the port of Bristol annually funnelled Irish trampers to and from harvest, and its poor law authorities were saddled with the heavy expense of paying the passage of the destitute. In 1833 for example, 3,378 Irish vagrants were 'passed' through the city. [12]

b) Economy and Society

Bristol's comparatively sluggish population growth suggests that its nineteenth century economic performance was weaker than that of many other cities. Britain's 'economic centre of gravity' shifted to the North and South Wales, while Bristol and its hinterland failed to

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6 B.W.E.Alford 'The economic development of Bristol in the nineteenth century: an enigma ?' P.McGrath and J.Cannon ed. *Essays in Bristol and Gloucestershire History* (Bristol, 1976) p.257.

7 H.A.Shannon and E.Grebenick op. cit., pp.7-8.

8 *1841 Census*, Age Abstracts.

9 *1851 Census*, Birth-places of the Inhabitants of the Principal Cities and Towns, p.clxxxiii.

10 *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor* (hereafter cited as *Condition*) (Bristol, 1884) pp.28-9; B.W.E.Alford 'The economic development of Bristol' op. cit., pp.267-9.

11 Frederick Engels *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) Oxford edn. (1958) p.104.

12 E.E.Butcher *Bristol Corporation of the Poor 1696-1834* (Bristol, 1932) pp.30-31, 81-2, 99, 107, 110, 117, 122, 129, 134, 139, 140, 154, 156; PP 1834 xxviii *Appendix to the First Report from the Commissioners on the Poor Laws* pp.894A-897A.

industrialise in the manner of its great rival Liverpool. [13] For example, output from the Gloucestershire coalfield rose from 40,000 tons in 1700, to 140,000 in 1800 to 250,000 in 1830, compared to the South Wales (Eastern section) increase from 10,000, to 1,200,000 to 3,250,000. [14] The disadvantages to the port of the narrow, tidal Avon became more obvious with the development of the Mersey and Clyde; established industries such as sugar-refining and glass-making suffered. [15]

Two schools of thought exist on the city's economy. The first is pessimistic, arguing that environmental factors alone were not to blame for the poor showing, but that entrepreneurship was deficient. The cautious Atlantic merchants dangerously narrowed their interests to the apparently sure returns of the sugar trade; where investment in industry did occur the short-termism of the mercantile mentality outweighed long-run needs. [16] Venality and self-interest on the part of the Corporation and the Merchant Venturers kept port duties uncompetitive and inhibited the development of municipal services.[17] Even firms which were success stories of the mid-century, such as soapmakers Christopher Thomas & Brothers, and chocolate manufacturers J.S.Fry and Son, lacked the aggressive promotional skills needed to retain their places as market leaders.[18] In contrast, the optimist reading points to the diversity of the Bristol economy as a strength, arguing that decline in some areas was offset by strength in others, such as financial services, brewing, printing and packaging, boot and shoe-making, and tobacco.[19] Projects like the Great Western Cotton Factory, Railway and Steamship demonstrate that Bristol's business leadership did have a 'grand strategy' for the city's recovery. [20] Nor is the criticism of the Corporation and the later Docks Committee, some argue, altogether warranted. [21]

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13 W.E.Minchinton 'Bristol - Metropolis of the West in the Eighteenth Century' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th. series, 4, (1954) pp.69-89, pp.88-9; idem., 'The Port of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century', ed. P.McGrath *Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Newton Abbot, 1972) pp.157-8.

14 M.Flinn *The History of the British Coal Industry* vol. III (Oxford, 1984) p.27.

15 B.W.E.Alford 'The Flint and Bottle Glass Industry in the Early Nineteenth Century: a case study of a Bristol firm', *Business History* x (1968), pp.12-21, esp. pp.20-1.

16 Kenneth Morgan 'Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century' *English Historical Review* 107, (1992) pp.626-50; idem *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1993); B.W.E.Alford 'The economic development of Bristol' op. cit., pp.263-4.

17 Ibid., pp.265-6.

18 S.J.Diaper 'Christopher Thomas and Brothers Ltd: the last Bristol Soapmakers. An aspect of Bristol's economic development in the nineteenth century', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* 105 (1987) pp.229-31; idem., 'J.S.Fry & Sons: Growth and Decline in the Chocolate Industry, 1753-1918', Charles E.Harvey and Jon Press ed., *Studies in the Business History of Bristol* (Bristol, 1988) p.49; see also Joan Day *Bristol Brass: A History of the Industry* (Newton Abbott, 1973).

19 Charles Harvey and Jon Press 'Industrial Change and the Economic Life of Bristol' in ibid.

20 B.J.Atkinson 'An Early Example of the Decline of the Industrial Spirit ? Bristol 'Enterprise' in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century, *Southern History*, 9 (1987) pp.69-89.

21 Ibid., pp.81-5; D.Large ed. *The Port of Bristol 1848-84* (Bristol, 1984) xxii-xxvi.

As far as this discussion is concerned, we need not assume that a comparatively weak economy led to increased need, nor that it inhibited relief. In 1845 the workhouse surgeon observed that:

> 'Bristol not being a manufacturing place, the labouring classes are not subject to fluctuations between high wages and total want of employment; therefore large masses of artisans, suddenly reduced to a state bordering on starvation, are fortunately unknown to us. Besides, Bristol, being an ancient city, possesses many charitable endowments, and ... these ... preserve many families from suffering'. [22]

Indeed, slower population growth could indicate an improved quality of life in some respects, such as access to schooling. [23] Neither need we suppose that the city lacked wealth which could be diverted to charity. For instance, occupation indicators (*Table 2.1)* suggest that Bristol had a larger wealth-holding sector than northern industrial cities of a similar size. [24] Taxation

Table 2.1 Wealth indicators, per 1,000 pop., Bristol and selected towns, 1841.

	Leeds	*Sheffield*	*Bristol*
Persons of independent means	21	20	45
Select professions *	21	21	50
Domestic servants	37	39	69

* = armed services, law, church, medicine, education, banking, accounting, per 1000 occupied, less domestic servants.

Source: 1841 Census, Occupations Abstract, England and Wales, pp.46-51, 222-237.

records leave a similar impression. The amount of assessed taxes paid in the 1840s per head of population in Bristol was £0.30, compared to Liverpool: £0.11, Manchester: £0.05,

22 Sir H.T.De La Beche and Dr Lyon Playfair *Report on the Sanatory* (sic) *Condition of Bristol* (1845) p.23.
23 See below Chapter 9, *Table 9.5.*
24 I have followed the methodology of Alan Armstrong *Stability and Change in an English County Town: A social study of York 1801-51* (Cambridge, 1974) p.30, Table 2.3, 'Selected social indicators for four Yorkshire cities'.

Birmingham: £0.13, and Leeds £0.04. [25] The percentage of the Bristol population paying Schedule B, D and E income tax in 1859-60 was 19.47 %, compared to Liverpool: 17.34%, Manchester: 15.32%, Birmingham: 14.27%, Leeds: 10.45%, and Sheffield: 9.51%. [26]

Despite the attraction of 'the Nobility and Gentry' to the Hotwells spa and the luxurious terraces of Clifton, this affluence did not reflect an aristocratic presence. [27] The merchant oligarchy had ousted the power of landed wealth in the late middle ages, and henceforth aristocrats had played little part in local philanthropy. [28]. As to the character of the Bristol middle class, it does not seem that the new century witnessed the emergence of a new breed of entrepreneur. Certainly there were 'new' areas of the city's economy, in the growth of the professions, the services and distribution, but the 'revolutionised' industries made only a small showing: less than 10% of occupied males worked in metal or extractive industries, while mass production of cotton was limited to the one large factory. [29] The great fortunes of the Wills and Fry families in the later nineteenth century may have been originally financed from outside the Bristol business nexus, but their spheres of activity, tobacco and chocolate, were familiar commodities of the Atlantic trade. [30] Nor was there a dramatic handover of local political power to aspiring new men in 1835, and as we shall see, it was religious and political beliefs that separated Liberals and Tories in the reform era, rather than large differences in wealth or occupational background. [31] An early nineteenth century 'making of the middle class' cannot be easily detected in Bristol's economic history, even if some of the data does hint at its proliferation.

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25 Calculated from the mean of assessed taxes (ie. window duties, levies on luxury items) 1845-7, divided by total population, 1841, see PP 1847-8 xxxix p.233; again I follow Armstrong, op. cit., p.30-1, Table 2.4: 'Assessed taxes in various towns, 1845-7, with incidence of taxation per head'.

26 W.D.Rubinstein 'The Size and Distribution of the English Middle Classes in 1860', *Historical Research* 61, (1988) pp.65-89 Table I, pp.82-7.

27 *FFBJ* 12/1/1811, advertisement for concert in the Assembly Rooms.

28 Rise of merchant power: C.Ross 'Bristol in the Middle Ages', C.Macinnes and W.Whittard Bristol and its Adjoining Counties (Bristol, 1955); David Harris Sacks *The Widening Gate Bristol and the Atlantic Economy, 1450-1700* (London, 1991) Part 1; for the minor aristocratic role in endowments and the Infirmary, W.K.Jordan 'The Forming of the Charitable Institutions of the West of England' *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, I, 8 (Philadelphia 1960) p.13; Amanda Berry 'Patterns of Patronage: English provincial Voluntary Hospitals in the Eighteenth Century', unpublished paper, History of Health and Medicine Seminar, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine, Oxford, 13/5/1993, pp.9-10, Table 3.

29 'New' areas, see E.Baigent 'Bristol society in the later eighteenth century with special reference to the handling by computer of fragmentary historical sources' unpublished University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis (1985), findings summarised in idem. 'Economy and Society in eighteenth-century English towns: Bristol in the 1770s', Dietrich Denecke and Gareth Shaw ed. *Urban Historical Geography: Recent Progress in Britain and Germany* (Cambridge, 1988), see pp. 115-6; 'revolutionised' industries, *1841 Census* Occupations Abstract: this is certainly an over-estimate as smiths are included; for cotton, Charles Harvey and Jon Press 'Industrial Change' op. cit., pp.9-10.

30 B.W.E.Alford 'The economic development of Bristol' op. cit., p.266.

31 Graham Bush *Bristol and its Municipal Government 1820-1851* (Bristol, 1976) pp.212-3; B.J.Atkinson op. cit., pp.82-6.

Relative wealth and a diverse economy did not mean of course that Bristol was immune from the harsh results of slumps in the trade cycle. Large sections of the working population were vulnerable to seasonal and cyclical downturns, as a brief consideration of the occupational structure will show. Of the 31,465 occupied males in 1841, the most numerous jobs were Labourer (5,537), Boot/shoe maker (2,003), Carpenter (1,232), Mason (1,054), Smith (1,036), Tailor (952), Domestic servant (924), and Painter/Plumber/Glazier (752); of 15,715 females employed, the popular areas were Domestic servant (7,568), Dress-maker (1,648), Laundry-keeper (1,115), Boot/shoe maker (599) and Cotton manufacture (594). [32] Of these groups, builders, shoe-makers and labourers had frequent recourse to the poor rates. [33] Dock labour had a seasonal rhythm, with the arrival of the West Indies sugar fleet in the summer months, and a slack period in the winter, other than in the Irish and Canadian trades. [34] Not only was the building trade poor in bad winters, but the Bristol industry's speculative nature meant that it was vulnerable when investment contracted. [35] Also at the mercy of the trade cycle were tailors, dressmakers and shoe-makers supplying warehouses for the colonial trades. [36]

In order to establish when such cyclical fluctuations occurred *Table 2.2* presents a collection of serial indicators of the Bristol economy. [37] None of these are helpful in isolation. First the changing level of the poor rate is shown to suggest variations in the scale of need for relief. [38] There are several drawbacks here: surviving sources do not permit consideration of rising property (and hence rateable) values over the period; a relatively stable level of rating (such as 1831-3) might disguise a sudden widespread incapacity to pay; and similarly we cannot assume that rates levied in a particular year necessarily reflected the need for social spending *in* that

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32 *1841 Census*, Occupations abstract.

33 *Appendix to the First Report from the Commissioners on the Poor Laws, Answers to Town Queries*, Joseph Webb, Master of St. Peter's Hospital, 1832, response to Query 37.

34 Comments based on *Bristol Presentments*, 1801, 1811, 1821, 1831, 1841, 1851, BRL microfiche 97290/1, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12.

35 Seasonality: BRL B7065 *Lewins Mead Meeting Domestic Mission Society, 2nd. Annual Report* (1841) p.3; J.Ward 'Speculative Building at Bristol and Clifton, 1783-1793' *Business History* (1978) pp.12-15.

36 BRL B7067 *Lewins Mead Meeting Domestic Mission Society, 18th. Annual Report* (1858).

37 See Chapter 9 for an investigation of the relationship between charity finances and the changing health of the local economy.

38 The records of the Corporation of the Poor were destroyed in the Blitz, hence the sources for rates shown here are: 1801-20, J.B.Kington *"A Burgess's" Letters* (Bristol, 1836) p.311, though I show the year of collection while Kington records the sum against the *previous* year; 1820-58, annual accounts published in *Bristol Gazette*; 1859-70, Parliamentary Papers: 1859 xxiv, 1860 lviii, 1861 liii, 1862 xlviii, 1863 li, 1864 li, 1865 xlviii, 1866 lxii, 1867 lx, 1868 lx, 1869 liii, 1870 lviii; numbers of poor relief recipients cannot be safely used as it is unclear whether different accounts refer to individual applicants or total numbers relieved (ie. including dependents).

Table 2.2 Serial indicators of Bristol's economy, 1800-70

year	poor rate	vessels in no.	tonnage in '000	customs duties £'000s	tonnage duties £	total duties	Wills £	shipbuilding tonnage
1800								1796
1801	13,812							2679
1802	12,350							1103
1803	11,700							1349
1804	11,350						600	2090
1805	11,250						1,700	1062
1806	11,500						3,700	1610
1807	11,750						2,262	1620
1808	11,500						4,700	948
1809	10,500						1,200	1214
1810	12,000							1662
1811	14,000						1,200	1638
1812	14,500						1,700	167
1813	15,500						2,400	2896
1814	16,000						2,100	581
1815	16,000						2,000	1153
1816	15,500						-169	1224
1817	15,500							1951
1818	20,500				10,373	23,093	-6,231	1546
1819	27,500				13,132	32,056	2,700	2623
1820	27,500				11,091	31,444	600	2872
1821	24,000				10,470	22,286		2107
1822	23,000				10,531	30,690		*1879*
1823	24,500				10,748	32,829		3200
1824	34,146				12,395	36,451		3917
1825	23,619				13,424	42,021		3723
1826	19,425				14,863	43,096	-518	1870
1827	21,263				13,934	43,152	1,600	2800
1828	27,020				*15,292*	44,188	800	3860
1829	31,577				15,833	43,670	300	3079
1830	28,278				15,999	43,712	1,200	2173
1831	24,771				*16,708*	45,388	1,200	1997
1832	25,842				15,784	45,257	1,800	1160
1833	25,526				13,511	40,093	2,300	1989
1834	30,693				13,164	39,311		1979
1835	29,957				14,620	40,152	4,200	3391
1836	27,095				14,479	40,304	4,500	856
1837	29,516				14,827	40,076	5,100	2090
1838	19,705				15,328	42,631	9,300	2135
1839	16,161				14,907	41,940	19,000	*2529*
1840	14,779				17,999	40,484		2049
1841	16,279				18,416	46,767	6,600	3233
1842	21,887				*15,858*	*43,885*	*10,500*	*6160*
1843	21,287				16,292	40,012	5,100	4587
1844	25,994				17,906	43,557		1339
1845	23,555				18,552	48,786	2,100	2145
1846	27,907				19,822	51,762	4,500	444
1847	23,963				19,768	47,914	3,000	1661
1848	27,564	7,215	544	1,037	21,025	42,628	3,400	1117
1849	28,090	7,260	559	1,042	19,145	36,757	4,000	5545
1850	22,000	7,177	553	1,052	12,088	42,343	5,000	1188
1851	26,594	6,758	529	1,101	12,794	45,695	8,400	4218
1852	24,184	6,389	512	1,020	12,047	47,475	3,000	1221
1853	27,889	5,680	526	1,194	12,822	43,262	4,000	714
1854	28,422	5,631	557	1,228	15,274	40,717	4.600	2768
1855	31,779	5,771	531	1,112	13,288	36,890	4,000	4020
1856	31,516	5,811	546	1,193	13,031	34,316	3,000	3892
1857	32,573	5,684	557	1,211	17,291	39,206	8,000	2343
1858	28,090	6,599	621	1,296	18,075	47,328	11,160	3003
1859	25,047	7,435	693	1,284	18,840	58,808	10,440	439
1860	26,339	7,747	710	1,219	19,329	52,017	10,890	1318
1861	27,668	7,618	753	1,336	22,721	59,230	11,520	1079
1862	29,500	9,230	849	1,317	19,827	54,943	13,500	1438
1863	34,376	7,449	738	1,151	20,160	48,206	13,950	1199
1864	40,919	7,528	716	1,103	17,915	55,600	7,920	4402
1865	31,828	7,358	739	1,106	18,642	58,545	8,370	3400
1866	36,720	7,916	780	1,174	18,920	65,067	7,920	370
1867	39,356	7,885	798	1,110	19,760	69,405	11,052	138
1868	42,427	7,987	805	1,120	20,791	69,554	12.024	1293
1869	36,966	8,031	853	1,184	21,034	66,176	12,024	692
1870	35,432	8.706	912	1,000	24,211	61,955	12,024	200

Source: Rates: 1801-20, J.B.Kington *"A Burgess's" Letters* p.311, 1820-58, annual accounts published in *Bristol Gazette*; 1859-70, Parliamentary Papers: 1859 xxiv, 1860 lviii, 1861 liii, 1862 xlviii, 1863 li, 1864 li, 1865 xlviii, 1866 lxii, 1867 lx, 1868 lx, 1869 liii, 1870 lviii; vessels/tonnage/duties: BRO Bristol Dock Company accounts; D.Large ed.*The Port of Bristol 1848-84* p.xiii, xx; Wills: B.W.E.Alford *W.D. & H.O.Wills and the Development of the U.K. Tobacco Industry, 1786-1965* (London, 1973), Table v, pp.464-466; ship-building: G.Farr *Shipbuilding in the Port of Bristol*, Appendix 4

year. [39] The next set of indicators relate to the port. Following municipalization of the docks in 1848 the Docks Committee records showed the number of vessels entering the port, their tonnage on entry, and the gross amount of customs duties received at Bristol. Earlier annual accounts of the Bristol Dock Company produce two further series dating back to 1818, showing the tonnage duties received and the total duties, though these are marred by reductions to the schedule of tonnage rates by the Company in 1834, and again after municipalization in the late 1840s.[40] The two final series are from individual industries, though the profits of the Wills tobacco firm were too idiosyncratic for use as a general indicator. Ship-building tonnage is rather more help, allowing for the fact that the industry entered long-term decline from the mid-century due to the Avon's unsuitability for large ocean-going vessels. [41]

With these shortcomings in mind, what broad conclusions can be drawn ? The surging poor rates mark out the second decade of the century as particularly difficult, with the volume of trade passing through the docks failing to accelerate, although shipbuilding's recovery demonstrates the importance of the cessation of the Napoleonic Wars. [42] By the late 1820s public spending was falling, the docks were busier, and shipbuilding was retaining the level of output it had achieved in the post-war period, though 1826 witnessed a slump. [43] Most indicators point to a downturn in the early to mid-1830s, stabilised at the end of the decade and the early 1840s, then another difficult cycle in the late 1840s, with the rates leaping up again, the port failing to expand, and both tobacco and shipbuilding performing poorly (this was also a slow phase of population growth). [44] The 1850s were a more successful period, with the benefits of the changed management of the Docks showing through by the latter part of the decade, tobacco enjoying profit increases, and ship-building remaining fairly stable. This situation continued

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39 See the discussion in P.J.Waller *Town, City and Nation: England 1850-1914* (Oxford, 1983) pp.257-9.

40 BRO Bristol Dock Company accounts; ed. D.Large op. cit. xiii, xx; total duties = tonnage + other duties such as lockage tolls and boat licenses; background, see Graham Bush op. cit., pp. 166-173, and Introduction to ed. D.Large op. cit.

41 Wills: B.W.E.Alford *W.D. & H.O.Wills and the Development of the U.K. Tobacco Industry, 1786-1965* (London, 1973), Table v, pp.464-466, idem. op. cit., pp.273-5; ship-building: G.Farr *Shipbuilding in the Port of Bristol. Maritime Monographs and Reports no.27* (London, 1977), Appendix 4; background Charles Harvey and Jon Press op. cit., p.6.

42 See above, Chapter 3 *Figure 3.3* for an inflation correction of the poor rates: the rise was still striking; John Bennet, untitled manuscript, BRO 36097 (b), (Portishead, 1858), typescript copy, pp.12-15 for post-war unemployment.

43 For the resurgence of labour activity in these boom years, *FFBJ* 12/2/1825, 5/3/1825, 12/3/1825, 16/4/1825; see also M.Gorsky 'James Tuckfield's Ride: Combination and Social Drama in Early Nineteenth Century Bristol' *Social History* 19, 3, (1994) pp.319-338; 1826: P.Ollerenshaw 'The Development of Banking in the Bristol Region' in ed. Charles Harvey and Jon Press op. cit. pp.57-8.

44 See also J.B.Kington op. cit., passim., quote p.328, and see Letter xxx 'General Summary' in particular; also John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* pp. 194-5; *Bristol Mercury* 12/12/1846, appeal by Rev. J.H.Woodward of St James.

until the mid-1860s when again all the serials show a slowing of growth, coupled with a dramatic hike in the poor rates.

Finer detail can be added to this by comparing Bristol's experience to the peaks and troughs of the British trade cycles identified by Rostow. [45] In most cases Bristol's indicators move in line with national trends, matching Rostow's troughs in 1811, 1829, 1842, 1848, 1855, 1862 and 1868, and peaks in 1825, 1831, 1836, 1839 and 1845. Again though, using the poor rates to discern a 'strong' match is not particularly reliable, since tax increases could lag behind years of need. For example in 1818 the rating increased from £15,500 to £20,500, and this may well have reflected the exigencies faced by the guardians in 1816.

c) Politics and Religion

The affiliations of party and sect will form an important theme of this study, firstly in explicating the contest within the local government elite over who should control the endowed charities, and secondly in explaining the fragmentation and division evident in the voluntary charities.

In national politics the city was a borough seat where two members were returned; electors had two votes which could be cast for any combination of candidates, though they might also choose to 'plump' for one alone. The eighteenth century ideal of the party machines was that one Whig and one Tory should be elected, theoretically representing the balance of interests in the town, but in practice this rarely held. [46] Low-cost, uncontested elections were unusual: the constituency had a large pre-reform freeman electorate with a high level of participation, a tradition of partisan division which sometimes engendered violence and corrupt practices, and a succession of candidates representing dramatically different shades of opinion. [47] General elections in nineteenth century Bristol were rarely a straight fight between Tory and Whig, and *Table 2.3* shows the pattern of party results, the order in which the parties appear in each row representing their place in the poll of that year.

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[45] W.W.Rostow 'Cycles in the British Economy: 1790-1914' in Derek Aldcroft and Peter Fearon ed. *British Economic Fluctuations, 1790-1939* (London, 1972) p.77.

[46] For Bristol's mid-eighteenth century 'political equipoise', N.Rogers, 'Bristol: Commerce and Politics' in *Whigs and Cities* (Oxford 1989) pp.299-301.

[47] Ibid.; J.A.Phillips, *Electoral Behaviour in Unreformed England, Plumpers, Splitters and Straights* (Princeton, 1982), 28-30; idem. *The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs: English Electoral Behaviour, 1818-41* (Oxford, 1992) ch.2; James Bradley *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism: Nonconformity in Eighteenth-Century Politics and Society* (Cambridge, 1990); Mark.Harrison *Crowds and History: Mass Phenomena in English Towns 1790-1835* (Cambridge, 1988) passim.

Table 2.3 Results of Bristol elections, 1800-70. [48]

	Elected		*Defeated*	
1801*	Tory			
1802	Tory	Whig		
1803*	Tory			
1806	Tory	Whig		
1807	Tory	Whig		
1812*	Tory		Radical	
1812	Tory	Whig	Reform Whig	Radical
1818	Tory	Whig	Reform Whig	
1820	Whig	Tory	Reform Whig	
1826	Tory	Whig	Reform Whig	
1830	Tory	Whig	Reform Whig	Radical
1831	Whig	Reform Whig		
1832	Tory	Whig	Reform Whig	Independent
1835	Conservative	Conservative	Liberal	Liberal
1837	Conservative	Liberal	Conservative	
1841	Conservative	Liberal	Conservative	
1847	Liberal	Conservative	Conservative	Radical
1852	Liberal	Liberal	Conservative	
1857	Liberal	Liberal		
1859	Liberal	Liberal	Conservative	
1865	Liberal	Liberal	Conservative	
1868*	Conservative		Liberal	
1868	Liberal	Liberal	Conservative	
1870*	Liberal		Conservative	
1870*	Liberal		Conservative	

* = by-election

Source: A.B.Beaven *Bristol Lists: Municipal and Miscellaneous* (Bristol, 1899) pp.170-174

The first decade saw political consensus represented by uncontested elections, though this broke down in 1812 with the emergence of the Radical challenge of 'Orator' Hunt. [49] Henceforth the main focus of excitement lay with the infighting between the conservative and Reform Whigs, notably on the issue of slavery, spiced by the occasional challenge of a Radical or Independent candidate, such as James Acland in 1830. [50] Tory strength in the city is demonstrated by their topping the poll throughout the first four decades, with the exception of 1820 and the 1831 reform crisis. The 1840s saw Conservative divisions. 'Ordinary citizen'

[48] Party names are listed as in the source, A.B.Beaven *Bristol Lists: Municipal and Miscellaneous* (Bristol, 1899) pp.170-4; they broadly conform to those current in the local press.

[49] Peter Brett 'The Liberal Middle Classes and Politics in three provincial towns - Newcastle, Bristol and York - c.1812-1841' unpublished PhD University of Durham (1991) pp.86-95; Mark Harrison op. cit., pp.209-219.

[50] Peter Brett op. cit., pp.220-221; Peter Marshall *Bristol and the Abolition of Slavery. The Politics of Emancipation* (Bristol, 1975) pp.24-6.

William Fripp fought 'gentleman' candidate Philip Miles, with the former presenting himself as a supporter of free trade, against the latter's protectionism. [51] The 1850s and 1860s were a period of Liberal hegemony, marred only by a Conservative by-election success in 1868.

Bristol's closed Corporation was dominated by the Tories from 1812, although pre-reform Whig councillors eschewed radicalism. [52] The Municipal Corporations Act failed to deliver the change that local Liberals hoped for, as the distribution of seats favoured wealthier wards. The result was a hung Council in which an 'old Whig' defection ensured the Tory predominance in the election of the aldermen; a Conservative majority then prevailed throughout the period. [53] In the course of the century more and more tasks were transferred from the parish to the city. The process had in fact begun as far back as 1696, with Bristol's pioneering Corporation of the Poor, a body that centrally administered parish poor relief and managed the town's workhouse, St. Peter's Hospital. [54] Other public bodies included the Dock Company, the Paving Commissioners and the Turnpike Trustees; after municipal reform a regular police force was established (1836), and in 1851 a Local Board of Health. [55]

Bristol had a long tradition of dissent, embracing Lollardy in the fifteenth century and Quakerism in the seventeenth and eighteenth; the number of registered non-conformist places of worship had grown dramatically by the 1810s. [56] 1820 trade directory listings showed 22 Anglican churches and chapels (including the Cathedral), and 25 dissenting: three Baptist chapels, two Friends' meeting houses, a synagogue, a Unitarian chapel, four Independent chapels, a Roman Catholic Church, eight Methodist chapels (including one Whitfieldite), as well as chapels for French Protestants, 'Christians', Seceders, Lady Huntingdon's Connection and the Welsh. [57] By 1850 the growing city boasted 38 Anglican and 46 dissenting places of worhip. [58] The impact of Evangelicalism in Bristol can be viewed partly from the perspective of

51 *FFBJ* 10/7/1841; A.B.Beaven op. cit., p.172.
52 Graham Bush op. cit.,ch.2.
53 Ibid., ch.7; H.E.Meller *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914* (London, 1976) pp.85-90; Aldermen were elected for six years: E.P.Hennock *Fit and Proper Persons Ideal and Reality in Nineteenth Century Urban Government* (London, 1973) p.13.
54 Paul Slack *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1988) pp.196-7; E.E.Butcher op. cit., idem., *Bristol Corporation of the Poor 1696-1898* (Bristol, 1972).
55 Graham Bush op. cit., chs 1, 9; Roderick Walters *The Establishment of the Bristol Police Force* (Bristol, 1975).
56 David Harris Sacks op. cit., pp.154-6, chs.9, 10; BRO EP/A/43/4; Jonathan Barry 'The parish in civic life: Bristol and its churches 1640-1750' in S.J.Wright ed. *Parish, Church and People* (London, 1988), pp.157-164.
57 *Matthews's Directory* 1820, pp.8-12.
58 *Matthews's Directory* 1850 pp.28-37.

voluntary societies associated with it, discussed in Section III; from the mid-century the Oxford Movement gained a foothold in the city. [59]

Evidence from the 1851 Religious Census revealed Bristol to be a comparatively devout city. *Table 2.4* demonstrates this from the perspective of 'sittings' - the available seats in places of worship - focusing only on Anglicanism and old dissent. Though slightly below the national average in Anglican sittings, Bristol was unusually strong in its Independent congregations, while the popularity of old dissent is also shown by comparing Baptists with other large towns. The Church of England in Bristol was not so powerful as it was in smaller, less industrialised towns like Bath and Cheltenham, but set against the fast-growing major cities it held up well.

Table 2.4 No. of sittings per 1,000 population, Bristol, England and Wales, selected towns.

	Church of England	*Independent*	*Baptist*	*Quaker*	*Unitarian*
Bristol	232	81	43	4	7
England and Wales	274	56	39	5	4
Bath	379	26	42	5	5
Birmingham	132	28	31	3	13
Cheltenham	309	58	65	3	8
Leeds	148	48	33	6	7
Liverpool	161	21	17	2	5
Manchester	125	43	15	4	9
Sheffield	144	3	16	6	7

Source: Religious Census 1851, PP. 1852-3, lxxxix, pp. clxxviii-ix, cclii-v, cclx-xi, cclxiii, cclxviii.

In terms of overall attendance the percentage actually worshipping in Bristol was 56.7, just below the mean for England and Wales, and well in excess of Liverpool (45.2), Birmingham (36.1), and Manchester (32.1); in this respect it ranked 23rd among English towns. The vigour of dissent was a major factor: non-conformity provided 56% of the sittings, and attracted 56% of worshippers. [60]

[59] Evangelical charities, Section III passim., and ch.10 note 123; Peter G.Cobb *The Oxford Movement in Nineteenth Century Bristol* (Bristol, 1988).

[60] *Religious Census 1851*, PP. 1852-3, vol. lxxxix; the problems of interpreting this source are discussed in K.S.Inglis 'Patterns of Religious Worsip in 1851' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 11 (1960) pp.74-86, pp.79-82 for town rankings.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided basic factual background on Bristol, 1800-70, and has highlighted some of the city's distinctive features. Though hardly an industrial or commercial bywater, nineteenth century Bristol did not share the experience of towns in the Midlands, South Wales and the North that benefitted from the classic areas of the industrial revolution - textiles, coal and metals. Nonetheless, its role as an entrepôt and its diverse industries and services ensured that it remained one of the nation's major cities, with a wealthy middle class. Local politics had a tradition of staunch conservatism though this did not prevent an eventual Liberal triumph in the parliamentary seats. In terms of religiosity Bristol was close to the national norm, though it was characterised particularly by the strength of dissent.

Armed with these considerations, we may now address the first theme - the city's old endowed charities.

Section I

Endowed Charity in Nineteenth Century Bristol

Introduction

In 1826 the *Bristol Mirror* reported Edward Philips' speech at a subscription appeal for 'distressed manufacturers' in the neighbouring counties: 'From the well-known character of Bristol and the illustrious names to be found in its history, including Burton, Canynge, Colston, and Reynolds, he anticipated great results.' [1] The charitable reputation alluded to in Philips' exhortation was not an abstraction but a reference to the multiplicity of endowed trusts which operated in the city. Indeed, when the term 'charity' was employed in public discussion in this period, its meaning was understood by Bristolians to denote the endowments rather than the benevolent voluntary societies which were comparatively new arrivals in the philanthropic arena. Trade Directories throughout the century offer a similar representation, with separate entries under the 'Benevolent Institutions' section for the municipal endowments and almshouses. [2]

Despite looming so large in public awareness, endowed charity has been largely ignored in the historiography of philanthropy. [3] Some of the blame for this neglect can be attributed to the authors of the standard works on English benevolence. Jordan's *Philanthropy in England 1480-1660* made extravagant claims for endowed charity in the early modern period, extolling the 'prodigal outpourings' and 'great surges' of charitable giving, which '..laid securely and deeply the foundations of the liberal society of which we are the inheritors..'. [4] Subsequent critics of his methodology pointed out the inadequacy of simply totalling capital sums recorded in wills without adjusting for inflation; when deflated by means of a price index the 'prodigious outpourings' appeared to be much more modest. [5] Later research also exposed Jordan's other assertion, that private benevolence far

1 *Bristol Mirror* 20/5/1826: Burton had endowed an almshouse, Canynge, the rebuilding of St Mary Redcliffe church, Colston, almshouses and schools and Reynolds a host of charitable outlets.
2 For example *Matthews's Directory 1841* pp. 310-2; *Wright's Directory 1900* p.736 (endowed schools), 748-9.
3 See Introduction.
4 W.K.Jordan *Philanthropy in England 1480-1660* (London, 1959) p.321.
5 W.Bittle and R.Todd Lane 'Inflation and Philanthropy', *Economic History Review* 2nd. series, xxix, (1976) pp.203-210.

outstripped poor law expenditure, as highly questionable. [6] While the 'debunking' of Jordan placed the charitable giving of the Tudor and Stuart era in a more satisfactory perspective, it did little to encourage future researchers to consider the subsequent role of the endowments.

David Owen's *English Philanthropy 1660-1960* can certainly not be accused of neglecting the theme. [7] An account of the parliamentary reform of endowed charity, leading to the establishment of the Charity Commission, was a major component of this work, and remains the standard reference on the subject. However, where Jordan's ideas were the fruits of extensive quantitative research (however flawed), Owen eschewed statistical analysis. While the legal context in which the trusts functioned was now clearly established, and the growth of the voluntary associations chronicled, the reader was left, as one reviewer noted, with no real sense of the 'pattern or scale of philanthropy'. [8] Even though Owen noted the tremendous growth of trust income during the nineteenth century, he did not provide a sufficiently solid empirical base to prompt a renewed consideration of the role of endowment in the period. [9]

In the absence of such discussion historians explaining the supersession of the endowed trust by the voluntary charity have tended to proceed by counterfactual assumption, general inference or ahistorical assertion. This ranges from the common-sensical observation that 'Charity Bequests had fallen out of fashion', to speculation that the steady rise in poor rates made testators less inclined to public beneficence when they wrote their wills. [10] Most typically writers have accepted that the accusations preceding the establishment of the nineteenth century Charity Commissions prove corrupt administration to have been the decisive factor. Georgian Hospitals were funded by subscription because '...the lump-sum bequest ... almost inevitably fell prey ... to misappropriation, malversation, or embezzlement'. [11] Paul Langford has summarised the standard viewpoint:

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6 P.Slack *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London 1988), ch.8, for a summary of the criticisms of Jordan.
7 D.Owen *English Philanthropy 1660-1960* (London 1964).
8 B.Harrison 'Philanthropy and the Victorians', *Victorian Studies* IX, 4, (1966) pp. 354, 373; the phrase is the source of the title of Chapter 3.
9 D.Owen op. cit., pp. 301-2.
10 Graham Bush *Bristol and its Municipal Government 1820-51* (Bristol, 1976) p.67; Peter Earle *The Making of the English Middle Class* (London, 1989) p.319.
11 Roy Porter 'The gift relation: philanthropy and provincial hospitals in eighteenth-century England', in Lindsay Granshaw and Roy Porter ed. *The Hospital in History* (London, 1989) pp.156-7.

'There was much awareness of the deficiencies of the old paternalism. The terms of ancient benefactions were easily ignored or abused, and trustees in perpetuity had a way of giving in to unbusinesslike habits, political manipulations, even downright corruption. It was believed that large sums of money had either been misused or forgotten: in 1786 Parliament initiated a great inquiry into parochial endowments in an attempt to arrest such neglect.' [12]

Daunted by the potential pitfalls of quantifying endowments, and dazzled by the social forces at work in voluntarism, historians have not looked critically at this interpretation. [13]

This section is an attempt to address these historiographical gaps through an examination of endowed charity in nineteenth century Bristol. While the evidence to some extent supports the notion that this form of benevolence was giving way before the combined agencies of voluntary association and the state, the nature of decline will be carefully qualified. The notion of corruption will be located in the discourse of party politics rather than in the day to day running of the charities, and in its place several causative factors for decline will be set out. It will also be argued that far from being a bywater in the history of social policy, the study of endowed charity is justified by the light it sheds on other aspects of nineteenth century life. In the case of Bristol it will elucidate in particular municipal government and politics in the Reform era.

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12 Paul Langford *A Polite and Commercial People, England 1727-1783* (Oxford, 1989) pp.482-3; see also B.Kirkman-Grey op. cit., pp.225-7.

13 For the reluctance of the historian of the Charity Commission to quantify the commission's findings, Richard Tompson *The Charity Commission and the Age of Reform* (London, 1979) pp.198-201.

Chapter 3

The 'pattern of philanthropy"

This chapter provides an empirical survey of endowed charity in Bristol, as a basis for subsequent analysis of the causes of its decline. It begins with a discussion of the nature of endowment and the sources available for its study. The central section uses parliamentary returns to reconstruct the pattern of giving in the city over the long term. It asks how the numbers and value of endowments made changed over time, and also whether change was discernible in terms of the category of recipient, the nature of the charity or the trustees chosen to administer it. The conclusion will make some preliminary remarks on the implications of these findings for re-assessing the causes of decline.

a) The nature of endowed charity and its sources.

Endowed charities were those which operated through the establishment of trusts, either in deed or will, by which some form of capital was bequeathed, yielding an annual return to be directed at the donor's chosen target. The form originated in the Middle Ages, with the urban hospital foundations of the late thirteenth century, and testamentary requirement of alms distribution by parish fraternities, providing clear precedents. [1] Legal codification of endowed charity was provided by the Elizabethan Statute of Charitable Uses (1601), which formed one aspect of the late Tudor poor law legislation. [2] This act encouraged the habit of endowment by specifying the meaning of a charitable gift and establishing charity commissioners to review disputed trusts; subsequent equity rulings tended to favour the charity rather than the aggrieved heir-at-law. [3] Eighteenth century courts tipped the balance back in favour of the testator's family, with the Mortmain Act (1736)

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1 For burgess endowment of hospitals, Miri Rubin 'Development and change in English Hospitals, 1100-1500', in Lindsay Granshaw and Roy Porter ed., *The Hospital in History* (London, 1989), pp.46-6; testamentary almsgiving, Patricia Basing ed. *Parish Fraternity Registers* (London, 1982), entries 63, 62, 69, 82, 113, 125; for the legal basis, Gareth Jones *History of the Law of Charity 1532-1827* (Cambridge, 1969) ch.1.

2 The prototype was 39 Elizabeth I c.6 1597, and the improved act, 43 Elizabeth I c.4 1601; W.K.Jordan *Philanthropy in England 1480-1660* (London, 1959), p.114, regarded it as statutory recognition of 'a long development', while Gareth Jones op. cit., pp.23, 52, saw it simply as a tidying up of the supervisory procedure.

3 Gareth Jones op. cit., chs iv, v.

forbidding deathbed gifts of land to charity, *cy-pres* rulings becoming less generous, and the appeals process in Chancery becoming prohibitively expensive and slow. [4]

How did endowment work in Bristol ? To assure perpetuity the group of trustees had to be a permanent body, typically a parish vestry, the town corporation, a gild or dissenting chapel. Capital initially took the form of property which engendered rents and leasing fees, but with the rise of the securities market in the eighteenth century it became more common either to leave consols or a lump sum for the purchase of stock. Income was targetted at the alleviation of poverty and sickness through the provision of doles, orphan-schools and almshouses, and also met broader social needs such as education, civil works, business loans and apprenticeship fees.

Four main parliamentary sources hold details of endowments that are amenable to a statistical approach: the Gilbert Returns of 1786-7, the first Charity Commission of Enquiry reporting 1819-1837 (hereafter the Brougham Commission), and two updated digests of the latter's findings, appearing 1868-76 and 1891-2. [5] Use has also been made of gift and charity books from individual parishes, where extant, and records of the Bristol Municipal Charity Trustees.

Government first strove to survey the nation's charitable spending on its poor and needy in the 1770's and 1780's, driven by the efforts of Thomas Gilbert to achieve poor law reform. [6] Having included almshouses in the 1776 Commons Committee investigation into workhouse provision, Gilbert then established the 'Committee on Certain Returns relative to the State of the Poor and to Charitable Donations and Co.' [7] The Committee's report of 1787 was based on a questionnaire submitted to every parish in the land, though doubts were expressed as to the truthfulness and comprehensiveness of the responses, prompting Gilbert to write again urging vestries to 'reconsider'

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4 Ibid., chs. vi-xi; a *cy-pres* ruling occurred when the terms of the trust could not be fulfilled, and had to be reformulated as 'near' as possible to the original objective.

5 For sections on Bristol: Gilbert: PP 1816 xvia *Abstract of Returns of Charitable Donations for Benefit of Poor Persons: - 26 Geo. III, 1786* pp.434-452; Charity Commissions 1819-37: PP 1843 xvi, xvii, *Analytical Digest of the Reports Made By the Commissioners of Inquiry into Charities* xvi, pp.40-41, xvii, pp.226-255; 1868-76: PP 1873 li, *Copies of the General Digest of Endowed Charities for the Counties and Cities mentioned in the Fourteenth Report of the Charity Commissioners, &c.* pp. 416-453; PP 1893-4 lxvii, *Return of the Digest of Endowed Charities in the County of Gloucester including Bristol...* pp.574-589; I follow David Owen, op. cit., ch. VII in describing the early nineteenth century investigation as the Brougham Commission, partly to distinguish it from the permanent board, established in 1853, partly to acknowledge the influence of Brougham's political designs on its inception..

6 Richard Tompson op. cit., pp.83-4; David Owen op. cit., pp.85-7.

7 26 Geo III 1786

their returns. The abstract of returns for Bristol runs to eighteen pages, detailing the names of donors, date, charitable head, form of investment (land or money), total amount given and annual income generated. A fundamental limitation of the source is that it is concerned with endowments vested in the parish for the benefit of the poor, hence ommitting those under the aegis of the Corporation and the gilds; these were substantial, particularly those for educational purposes. As to reliability, the absence of visiting commissioners undoubtedly invited laxness: when the Brougham Commissioners reported on St Stephens in 1822 they prefaced their remarks by observing that insufficient effort had been made to respond to Gilbert with the 'particularity required'. [8] The real problem seems to have been the ad hoc administrative and accounting procedures of the vestries, rather than deliberate obstruction. In 1819 St James parish pre-empted the commissioners' visit by ordering a full review of their endowments, on the grounds that the recent deaths of several vestry officers left the remainder 'in complete ignorance of their trust funds'. [9] The less conscientious Temple parish was told to employ an accountant so that the the Churchwarden's accounts might be 'kept by such a method as may appear more explicit'; it duly handed its charity records to attornies, who produced a long list of incorrect distributions. [10] Such examples hardly inspire confidence in the factual basis of the Gilbert returns. Their use has therefore been confined to cross-checking dates of endowment missing from the abstract of returns of the more thorough Brougham Commission, and as a source for Quaker and Methodist charities, which fell outside the latter's ambit.

The Brougham Commission developed from the Select Committee investigating 'The Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis', appointed in 1816. [11] Two years later Brougham had succeeded in expanding its field of research country-wide, and was promoting a bill to widen the range to all charities. This was enacted in an emasculated form, exempting Universities, public

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8 T.Manchee *The Bristol Charities, being the Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring Concerning the Charities in England and Wales, so far as relates to The Charitable Institutions in Bristol* (Bristol 1831) Volume II, p. 301.

9 Manchee I, p. 467.

10 BRO P/Tm/E 1 46, P/Tm/V 4th December 1821.

11 David Owen op. cit., p.183, Chester New *The Life of Henry Brougham to 1830* (Oxford, 1961) ch. xii, A.Aspinall *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party* (Manchester, 1927) p.236, see Brougham's motivation for charity enquiry as deriving from his interest in education, piqued by lawyer's instincts.

schools, Jewish and Quaker charities from investigation, along with all institutions or societies predominantly funded by voluntary contributions or subscription. [12] The Commissioners visited Bristol in 1821 and 1822 and the results were published in their sixth and tenth reports. [13] These were later reprinted by a local newsman, Thomas Manchee (one-time editor of the Liberal *Bristol Mercury*) with a 300 Guinea contribution raised from various worthies. A full nation-wide digest was finally prepared in 1843, with 30 pages of the abstract devoted to Bristol, and the reports and the digest have been the main source for the analysis below. In addition to the information offered by the Gilbert returns, these have fuller accounts of each endowment, often transcribing the precise wording of the will, if still held in the parish chest, or in the case of more ancient charities the details in benefaction tables or on boards or tablets in the church. Non-parochial charities are dealt with at length, while appendices detail rentals and leases of trust property.

With some reservations, the Brougham Commission can be said to have achieved a reliable record of the trusts. As already noted, the presence of visiting commissioners does appear to have prompted a genuine desire by the vestries to fully account for their gifts and correct prior malversation; more will be said of this below when the degree of pre-reform corruption is evaluated. The Merchant Venturers also found themselves criticised for their operation of one of the Colston legacies and after a long battle in Chancery were compelled to refund monies to the charity. It is in the case of the Corporation's activities that the accuracy of the Commission's findings are most dubious. There were criticisms, for instance of the Grammar School over-charging, and of the Corporation illegally calculating excessive interest on a debt owed to them by Queen Elizabeth's Hospital. Overall the Corporation certainly felt it had received a clean bill of health, and it is notable that its charity administration was not a feature of the later Municipal Corporation Commissioners' report. Subsequent to this, in his evidence to the House of Lords in petitioning against the Municipal Corporations Bill, Daniel Burges, the Corporation's solicitor cited the

12 59 Geo III, PP 1818 i 502, 1819 i A 455; for background Kevin Grady 'The records of the Charity Commissions as a source for urban history' *Urban History Yearbook* (1982) pp.31-7.

13 6th Report 30 June 1821, PP 1821 xii, 10th Report, 28th June 1823 PP 1824 xiii.

approval of the Brougham commissioners for the conscientious administration of the monies. [14] Doubt was soon to be cast on these pious protests when, following the reform of the corporation an independent body of Municipal Charity Trustees was established. In the extensive litigation which followed the Trustees' efforts to gain control of charitable assets from the Council further malpractice came to light. [15] In themselves these malpractices do not seriously call into question those findings of the 1821/2 investigation which have been used for this survey, as the disputes relate mostly to pre-1680 endowments, and to the question of favouritism in the choice of recipients, neither of which distort the data employed.

The appointment in 1860 of a permanent Charity Commission with clearly delegated legal powers, led to the next phase of inquiry. [16] Bristol was surveyed again in 1869-70, and once again a summary was published locally, detailing the endowments made since 1822. Where a parish had kept a clear record of nineteenth century endowments, St. Paul's for example, it has been possible to cross-reference and satisfactorily confirm the thoroughness of this last commission. The two latter Commission reports broadened the range of charities surveyed to include those institutions primarily funded by subscription, such as the Infirmary and the Orphan Asylum.

The method employed is the collation from these sources of all available quantitative information on endowed charity in Bristol between 1680 and 1890, and the presentation in statistical form of evidence of how much was left, at decadal intervals, under the various charitable heads. In pushing the starting date back to 1680 the object has been not only to catch all the potential fluctuations of the eighteenth century, the putative time of decline, but to view the situation before the establishment of Bristol's workhouse (1696) and Infirmary (1737), and so to judge whether the existence of union poor rates or subscription charity might have restrained endowments. [17]

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14 House of Lords Journal, 5th August 1835 p. 405.
15 See below, Chapter 4 b).
16 Richard Tompson op. cit., ch.IX.
17 A secondary advantage of this periodisation is that the material provides a sequel to W.K.Jordan's study of Bristol endowments, which runs to 1660: see 'The Forming of the Charitable Institutions of the West of England' *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* I, 8, (Philadelphia, 1960), a subsidiary publication to his main study.

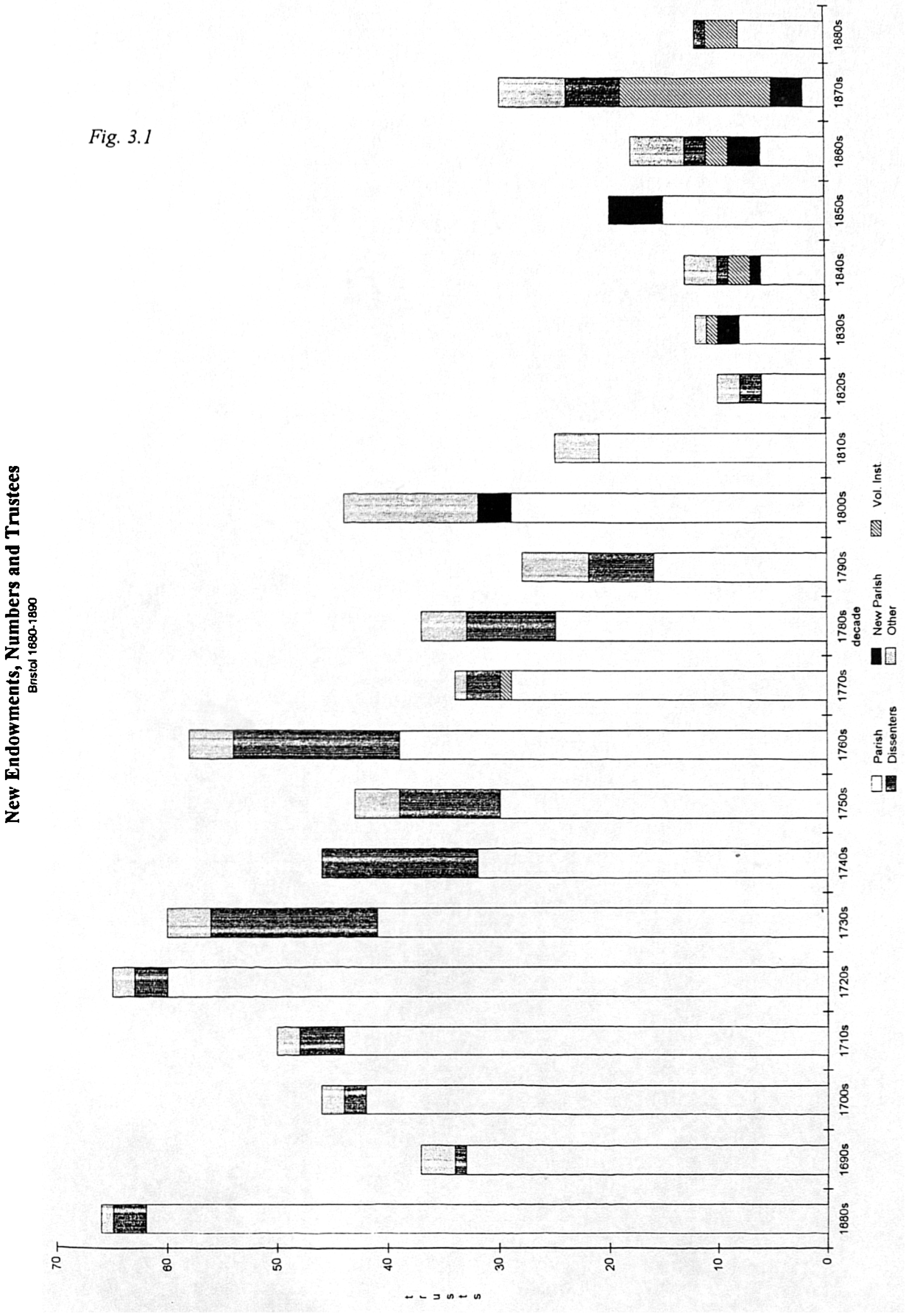
b) Numbers and values of endowments: Parochial and non-parochial.

Figure 3.1 (over) presents the numbers of new endowments made by decade, specifying the different categories of trustee. 'Parish' bequests were those administered by the churchwarden or vestry of the older city parishes, while 'New Parish' refers to those established from the late eighteenth century. These Anglican charities are distinguished from those of Dissenters, primarily Baptists, Quakers and Unitarians. Of the non-parochial gifts, 'Others' are those under the supervision of the Corporation, the Municipal Charity Trustees, the Merchant Venturers, or some other specified body of feoffees, while 'Voluntary Institution' refers to charities that were predominantly funded by subscription or non-trust donations.

Long-term numerical decline began in the latter part of the eighteenth century, despite a brief rally between 1800-20. The most striking component of this decline was the reduced role of charities in the trust of parish vestries, a trend which was not offset by the few endowments to newly created parishes. Parochial charities represent by far the most numerous form of endowment, amounting to 650 of the 737 which the Brougham Commissioners surveyed. The fact that the majority of these were targeted at poor relief underlines the dual function of the parish in tackling poverty. On the one hand the parish was integral to the Corporation of the Poor as the bureaucracy which assessed and collected the rates, on the other it had the resources to offer doles of money, bread, coal and clothing to its own local needy. However, by the mid-eighteenth century the number of beneficent testators prepared to establish such dole funds had begun a long-term decline, which, despite occasionally reviving, was to continue throughout the nineteenth century.

A similar pattern was followed by the non-parochial charities. Dissenting charities were concerned with the maintenance of ministers and sectarian education, and these too did not thrive in the nineteenth century. Bequests to 'Others' were usually geared to a city-wide clientele, with almshouses, education and health figuring strongly in this category. The 1790s and 1810s saw these flourishing. However, although the municipal corporations reform of 1835 removed the

Fig. 3.1



Source: Gilbert: PP 1816 xvia pp.434-452; Charity Commissions 1819-37: PP 1843 xvi, pp.40-41, xvii pp.226-255; 1868-76: PP 1873 li pp. 416-453; PP 1893-4 lxvii pp.574-589; T.Manchee *The Bristol Charities, being the Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring Concerning the Charities in England and Wales, so far as relates to The Charitable Institutions in Bristol* (Bristol, 1831); BRO P/St J/Ch/92: St. James Vestry List of Charities, 1915 *Year Book and Notes on Bristol Municipal Charities and Endowed Schools 1987.*

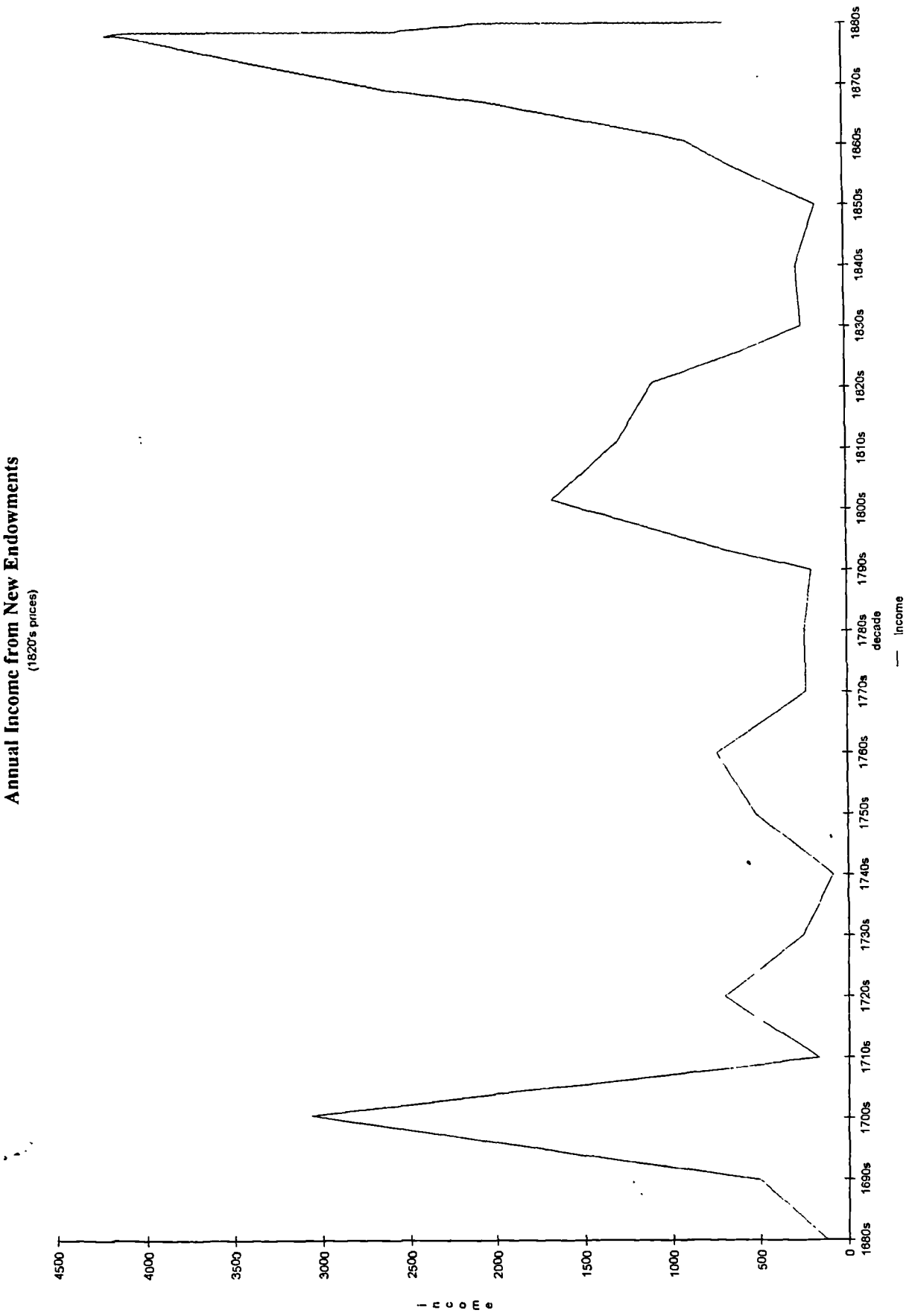
administration of many of these from the city corporation to the Municipal Charity Trustees, there was no dramatic increase in endowment of these gifts as a result; in fact the mid-nineteenth century was a particularly low-point. At the end of the sequence only voluntary institutions, notably the two main hospitals, were clear growth areas. [18]

If the values of new endowments are considered (*Figure 3.2*, over) it is extremely difficult to discern any clear pattern over the period, though there are some points of comparison with Figure 1. The graph is calculated on annual income generated by all new endowments made over the period, by decade. This represents the amount of new money coming available to the spending authorities, rather than the actual capital sums bequeathed. Since earlier endowments took the form of property it is impossible to measure financial worth in terms of capital value, hence the use of annual income of new trusts as the indicator (see Appendix 1). The values recorded by the Brougham Commission, which visited Bristol in 1821-2, have been used and the subsequent endowments adjusted to 1820s prices by means of the Rousseaux price index.

While retaining some of the fluctuations of *Figure 3.1*, eg. the upturn of 1800-20 and the downturn 1830-59, this reveals that there was no necessary correspondence between the volume and value of new trusts. There is no clear evidence of a gradual decline in size of endowments throughout the two centuries. The lowest value decades, the 1740s and 1850s, occur at apparently random points in the survey, nor are any trends maintained for more than three decades: see for example 1770-1800 in contrast to the preceding and successive decades. The irregularity of the results can be explained partly in terms of the impact of individuals donors. Without Edward Colston's foundation gift for his school the years 1700-10 would have mustered a mere £ 149-7s-0d, and the same could be said of 1820-30, with Bonville's donation, providing £ 1067-12s-9d p.a. for almshouse and benevolent school purposes, accounting for 96% of the decadal total. So while the

[18] Endowments to the General Hospital and the Bristol Infirmary contributed greatly to the peak of the 1870s shown in Figs. 3.1 and 3.2, see PP 1893-4 lxvii *Return of the Digest of Endowed Charities in the County of Gloucester including Bristol...* Supplementary Digest pp.574-89

Fig. 3.2



Source: As for *Fig. 3.1*

practice of endowment was continuous, the scale of new gifts was uneven and apparently owed more to individual inclination than social need.

This evidence also points to an odd disjuncture between the actual sequence of decline and that which might be expected if the 'corruption' argument is followed. [19] At national level the political concern over charity administration which led to the various commissions of enquiry gathered pace at the start of the nineteenth century. However, in money terms the mid to late eighteenth century, was poorly endowed, with the post-Gilbert era, when Brougham and others were forcing the issue of venal management of charities onto the political agenda, actually showing a marked revival. A new nadir was reached in the mid-nineteenth century, with 1830-1860 a notably low value tri-decadal cycle, yet this period saw the most significant reforms to charitable trusts in over two hundred years, with the investigative work of the Commission, the establishment of Municipal Charity Trustees, and the Charitable Trusts Act of 1853. *Fig 3.1* shows the same pattern, with a rise in number of gifts 1800-20, and a slump 1820-70. This throws into question any simplistic causal link between 'corruption' and the establishment of government enquiries into charity. It is almost the reverse of what might be expected.

c) The charitable heads.

Table 3.1 (over) breaks down the number of endowments made, grouping them into various categories. At the bottom of each column a percentage figure shows what proportion of the whole each of the 'charitable heads' accounted for, in financial terms, at the time of the second Charity Commission report of 1868-9. The exercise amply demonstrates that the numerical demise of endowed charity was due to a decisive drop in gifts to the church and to the poor, with the decade commencing 1770 representing the pivotal 'point of no return'. This trend is directly related to the fall-off in gifts to parish trusteeship noted in *Figure 3.1.* However, in terms of overall financial contribution the parish trusts for church and poor did not amount to more than 24%. Bequests for the elderly and education were sustained through this period and beyond, while the increase in gifts

[19] See above, Section I, Introduction.

Table 3.1

Number of Endowments by charitable head, Bristol 1680-1890

Decade	*Church*	*Poor*	*Elderly/ Widows*	*Economic*	*Health*	*Education*	*Misc*
1680s	2	58	5				
1690s	5	24	8				
1700s	10	29	3	1		3	
1710s	11	29	4	2		5	
1720s	10	45	7			3	
1730s	6	30	14	1		9	
1740s	9	22	3	1		11	
1750s	4	27	3		2	6	1
1760s	11	30	9		1	7	
1770s	5	17	6		1	5	
1780s	3	16	13		1	3	1
1790s	6	9	9			4	
1800s	7	16	11	4	3	6	2
1810s	5	12	5			2	1
1820s	4	2	3			1	
1830s	2	4	4		1	1	
1840s	1	7	3		2		
1850s	1	10	3			2	
1860s	2	4	3		2	3	1
1870s	4	5	2		9	4	
1880s	2	6	2		4	4	
% Income, 1868-9:	*14%*	*9.40%*	*25.30%*	*1.70%*	*7.90%*	*41.50%*	*0.30%*

Church: sermons, repairs, maintenance of clergy
Poor: doles of clothing, money, bread, coal
Elderly: almshouses, pensions
Education: schools, scholarships
Economic: loans, apprentice fees
Health: aid to blind; pregnancy; hospitals
Misc: aid for prisoners, debtors; public works

Source: As for *Fig. 3.1*

for health purposes reflects the growing tendency to bequeath to subscription institutions. The remainder of this section will concentrate on a development of the process revealed in *Table 3.1*, breaking down the charitable heads into their constituent parts, illustrating their operation anecdotally.

c.i) The Church.

The heading 'Church' most typically covers endowments providing for sermons and payment for the minister, though occasionally bell-ringing and upkeep of the building feature. Often these gifts would be closely linked with the establishment of a poor dole: an example from the peak years of the early eighteenth century is that of John and George Hudson of Temple parish, a father and son, who

in 1710 established a fund that combined several of the characteristic donor aspirations. A rent charge produced £5 5s annually, of which £1 13s 4d went to the minister, 4s to the clerk, 2s 8d to the sexton, 5s to the churchwardens and the remainder to four poor widows and the poor of the parish. These payments were made on Ash-Wednesday and the feast of St John the Evangelist, on which days the minister was enjoined in the will to preach a sermon. [20] Only rarely does the motive of this kind of donor appear explicitly, as in the case of Ezekiel Nash, who in 1800 left money for a sermon and bread dole to St James parish to mark 'the donor's thankfulness to Almighty God, for his wonderful preservation in an engagement with a French frigate, March 8th 1762.' [21] In both these cases the sermon operates as the condition of the gift, and it may be that the testator sought to cheat death's finality through regular commemoration in these sermons; perhaps also this practice was the heir to the medieval chantries, which ensured the welfare of the soul in the afterlife. [22] The commemorative sermon endured into the nineteenth century, but by this time donors were also beginning to specify church repairs or maintenance: only one such gift was made before 1790, eight were made in the next sixty years. Mrs Chetham Strode's bestowal of £30 government stock to pay for the cleaning and upkeep of her husband's monument in St Paul's church typefies the newer form, which, though circumventing the minister, still sought some permanence in the face of death.

It would be tempting to explain the long-term slide of church-based endowments as a function of the growing secularization of urban society, but such a view may well be anachronistic, given the eighteenth century roots of the decline. [23] Bristolians were revealed by the Religious Censuses of 1851 and 1881 as comparatively dutiful, with one estimate of the church-going population placed at 38% (1851) and 34% (1881), as against 20% and 10% for Liverpool. [24] In terms of total attendances (morning *and* evening service), 1881 saw 109,452 worshippers on census Sunday, out of

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20 Manchee I, pp. 392-3.
21 Ibid I, p. 464.
22 Clive Burgess '"A fond thing vainly invented": an essay on Purgatory and pious motive in later medieval England.' in ed. S.J.Wright *Parish,Church and People* (London, 1988) for a more general discussion of the theme.
23 The extent of nineteenth century secularization is far from certain, see for instance Jose Harris *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1993) ch.6.
24 See Chapter 2 c); estimate: D.J.Carter 'Social and Political Influence of Bristol Churches 1830-1914' unpublished M.Litt. thesis, University of Bristol (1971), ch.2.

a population of 206,874.[25] Even allowing for double attendance this is hardly indicative of the degree of apathy and agnosticism that might sustain a 'secularization' thesis.

Bristol was also a dissenting city, with non-conformist congregations providing over 50% of sittings by 1851. Evidence in the Commissions suggests that while Quakers and Unitarians were prepared to bequeath money for the poor and for education, only the Baptists used this method to support their ministers, through trusts to provide livings, and in some cases training funds. If these gifts, made in the eighteenth century, are separated out from the rest the Church of England's position becomes starkly clear, as *Table 3.2* shows.

Table 3.2. Church endowments in Bristol by denomination, 1700-1799

	Total	Baptist	Anglican
1700-9	10	0	10
1710-9	11	1	10
1720-9	10	1	9
1730-9	6	1	5
1740-9	9	5	4
1750-9	4	3	1
1760-9	11	5	4
1770-9	5	0	5
1780-9	3	0	3
1790-9	5	1	4

Source: PP 1816 XVIa pp.434-452; PP 1843 XVII pp.226-255

What looked in *Table 3.1* like a temporary return in the mid-century to the totals of the 1700-29 period of church endowments is now revealed as due to the Baptist influence, thus moving the point of Anglican fall-off back as far as the 1730's.

c.ii) The Poor.

There are four types of dole under the head of 'Poor', those of clothing, bread, coal and money. These form the bulk of the parish charities, and along with the church funds, it is the withering of these which contributes most noticeably to the numerical fall-off of parochial endowment. Bread

[25] See J.F.Nicholls and John Taylor *Bristol: Past and Present Volume II Ecclesiastical History* (Bristol, 1881) Appendix pp.305-8.

and money doles were the most popular type; six sample decades are shown in *Table 3.3* to suggest the pattern.

Table 3.3. Number of endowments to the poor in selected decades

	Clothing	Money	Bread	Coal
1670-9	1	21	23	-
1710-9	1	12	14	2
1750-9	2	17	7	1
1780-9	2	7	6	1
1810-9	1	6	4	1

Source: as *Table 3.2*

As is the case with church gifts a sustained decline begins from the 1770's, becoming particularly marked by the 1820's, though a number of fresh endowments continue to be made throughout the nineteenth century.

In addition to specifying the type of relief they wished to provide donors would most usually indicate which section of the poor were to receive their benevolence, upon what date the gift would be made, and to whom the administration was entrusted. Some random examples from the different parishes will illustrate these considerations. In 1755 Robert Sandford left £ 1,000 to the minister and churchwardens, the interest of which was to be paid to thirty poor housekeepers not in receipt of alms, annually on St Thomas' day. [26] Daniel Lane's bequest of 1802 produced 10s to go to widowed housekeepers not receiving alms every 7th November. [27] The choice of distribution dates which were neither saint's days nor public holidays was made clear by Elizabeth Nicklus, whose will in 1731 specified the 1st of February, 'being the day of her birth'. Nicklus's target group was six poor sailors' widows or six poor housekeepers not in receipt of alms; she would no doubt have been doubly chagrined to discover that by 1821 the churchwardens had lumped her £ 1 10s interest in with the general Christmas gifts. [28] Others were far less precise in their intentions than those

[26] Manchee II, p.85.
[27] Ibid II, p. 358.
[28] Ibid II, p.394.

quoted, though this could simply be a function of the abbreviated form in which the wills were recorded in the church tables; for instance, in 1666, Samuel Hale 'gave £10, the profit thereof to the poor weekly, in bread, forever.' [29]

Viewed collectively then, there is much common ground between these gifts to the poor. The trustees were almost always minister and churchwardens, the vestry, or the feoffees of the church lands, as opposed to nominated individuals. Days when the benefaction was laid out were either Sundays, Christmas, a saint's day or a specified date of particular significance to the testator. The 'poor' were either conceptualised as a group which, though not identified precisely, would be recognisable to the trustees, or as a carefully circumscribed sub-group of the needy, such as house-keepers, widows, regular churchgoers and so on. One of the most common qualifications to the definition of the 'poor' was that they should not be in receipt of 'alms', in other words, charity should not to be used as a supplement to the poor rate.

c.iii) The Elderly/Widows

Bequests to the elderly and to widows are treated separately here, though this is an ambiguous aspect of the taxonomy since these recipients are not always clearly distinguished from the 'poor'. [30] Three types of gift have been grouped under this head, doles geared to the elderly and to widows, and bequests to almshouses. Doles aimed at the elderly as a general group are most infrequent, there being only six made since 1680. Most almshouses examined by the Brougham Commissioners are recorded as housing the elderly, in phrases such as 'poor old maids', or 'old poor decayed bachelors', though age is only rarely specified - as in the case of Fry's Mercy House, which insisted its almswomen '...should not be under the age of fifty years at the time of election'. [31] Whether doles aimed at widows were intended for the elderly is more questionable - the most typical wording of a parish gift being simply 'poor widows'. [32] A rare designation of age is found in Mary Partridge's

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29 Ibid II, p.277; the date recorded here may well be erroneous, as Hale's other gifts, to St. James and St. Mary Redcliffe, record the date of his will as 1686, see I, 434 and II, 79.

30 For almshouse gifts where no specific reference to old age is made, see for instance Manchee I: White's, 'the poor people', p.123, St.James Back, 'poor parish paupers', p.413, and Manchee II, Redcliff Hill, 'relief of the poor people', pp56-7.

31 Manchee I p.199, Blanchard's, p.192, Ridley's; Manchee II p.61, Fry's; for further references to age, see also Manchee I p.79, Trinity, p.89, Fosters, p.217, Merchant Tailors', p.405, Spencer's.

32 For example, see the widows' gifts made in St.James parish: Manchee I, pp.433, 445-6, 457-9, 462-3, 449-50, 456, 460-2.

gift, whose recipients were required to be '40 years or upwards', though this is hardly conclusive. [33] Further justification for disaggregating widows from the 'poor' is found if the long-run trends in giving are compared:

Table 3.4. Gifts to the poor, widows and almspeople, over 50-year cycles

	Almshouses	Widows	Poor
1680-1729	15	13	185
1730-1779	8	18	126
1780-1829	18	16	55
1830-1879	12	3	30

Source: as *Table 3.2*

Bequests to widows follow a different pattern from those for the poor, and there are two possible explanations for this. Either gifts to widows *were* meant for the aged, and in contrast to the poor, donors retained their level of concern for this group, at least till the 1830s; or, 'widow' was not age-specific, but was consistently seen as more deserving of charity. We will now consider the trends in more detail.

Table 3.1 clearly suggests a numerical decline in gifts to the elderly and widows, but this needs some qualification. Bequests to almshouses did continue in the mid-nineteenth century, and indeed this was one area where donors were prepared to endow funds to the charge of the new Municipal Charity Trustees. [34] The persistence of almshouse bequests is to be explained partly in terms of trusteeship, and partly in the nature of the institutions. Non-parochial trustees were consistently chosen to administer such endowments, as some of these were intended to be city-wide institutions, or to cater to a particular clientele, such as retired seamen. Of the 25 almshouses listed in the city directory of 1841 only 6 appear to be specifically parochial, in name or funding, while 4 were for

[33] Manchee I p.463
[34] PP 1873 li pp.418-9, for example, Fripp and George's deed of 1840 and Hill's will of 1867.

dissenters, and 2 received funding from the poor rates. [35] This type of gift was therefore less sensitive to the decline in the role of the parish as the administrator of charity. It may also be that the concrete presence of almshouses, and their manifest use as old peoples' homes/hospices rendered them more impervious to changing attitudes to the poor. Lastly, demographic pressure for almshouse provision intensified, as the national proportion of over-60s in the population rose from one in fifteen in 1826, to one in thirteen by 1911. [36]

It must be said however, that there was no very significant increase in provision. *Table 3.5* samples trade directories between 1793 and 1884, to demonstrate how modestly the number of almshouse places available in the city grew. This is particularly strange given the impressive increase in income from the almshouse endowments between the Brougham Commission report and the Commission of 1869-70 - a rise from £ 3,706 to £ 12,177; as a proportion of total endowed income the almshouse share rose from 18% to 25%. [37]

Table 3.4 Almshouse places 1793-1884

	Men	Women	Either	Total
1793-4	52	177	77	306
1852	43	199	82	324
1884	66	210	73	349

Source: Bristol Trade Directories, 1793-4, 1852, 1884.

The post-1830 period was less notable for the provision of gifts to widows, which fell away decisively. [38] This was surely an aspect of the decline in parochial endowments - the last parish gifts to widows being recorded in the 1830's. Another possible factor was the shifting nature of

35 *Matthews's Directory* 1841 pp. 311-2.

36 Michael Anderson 'The social implications of demographic change' in F.M.L.Thompson ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 2 People and their Environment* (Cambridge, 1990) p.46.

37 The Brougham commissioner did not produce a total for almshouse/pension income, so my figure is a simple addition of almshouse gifts listed in 1819-37: PP 1843 xvi, pp.40-41, xvii pp.226-255, cross-referenced with Manchee.

38 Although one large gift was made, by Hannah Ludlow, will proved 1869, which the 1891-2 Charity Commissioners found to be producing £527 p.a.; according to the *Year Book and Notes on Bristol Municipal Charities and Endowed Schools 1987* this provided pensions for women over 50.

women's philanthropy. Endowments made to widows were particularly favoured by female testators, perhaps in response to their personal experience of widowhood. [39] It may be that the new forms of voluntarism that developed in the nineteenth century, such as lying-in (childbirth) and visiting charities, offered a greater range of possibilities to the benevolent woman. [40] Interestingly, such gifts continued to be made to the Bristol Municipal Charity Trustees well into the twentieth century, now sometimes specifying widows and sometimes women of a particular age. [41] Philanthropic concern for the elderly was an enduring sentiment, even after the introduction of state pension schemes. Perhaps the imminence of the testator's death has kept the plight of the aged constantly to the fore ?

c.iv) Economic Aid

This category of endowment covers gifts designed to create employment, either through loans to enable a prospective business to be established, or money to pay for apprenticing. This was not a popular charitable head, and is almost entirely restricted to the earlier part of the period under consideration.

Of those recorded in the eighteenth century, only one was a loan fund, set up in 1735 for Quaker tradesmen. [42] All the rest were sums for apprenticing the young, though only one such fund was set up after the 1740's. One conclusion from this could be that as apprenticeship became less important in the town's evolving economic structure, so donors became less convinced of the efficacy of this form of gift as a means of preventitive charity. By the nineteenth century parish involvement in apprenticeships persisted, for example in St Mary Redcliffe, where pupils of the Pile St. School had the benefit of a fund to pay a few premiums. [43] The Charity Trustees also made occasional agreements for the school pupils in their charge: in 1837 Henry Newman was apprenticed to sea

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39 Of eight eighteenth century widows' gifts in St James, six were endowed by women: Manchee I pp. 433, 445-6, 462-3, 463, 456, 460-2.

40 These developments are discussed fully in Chapter 8.

41 *Year Book and Notes on Bristol Municipal Charities and Endowed Schools 1987*, for example: 1898, Hannah Marriot: women over 50, 1909, Catherine Mary Castle: widows or unmarried daughters of merchants, bankers, doctors and lawyers, 1927, John Colston Barrow: spinsters over 50, 1937, Sailors College Pension Charity: widows and daughters of Bristol sailors, 1959, Edith Garlick: women over 50.

42 PP 1816 xvia p. 436, Edward Dowell's charity.

43 Manchee II p.54-5, Fisher's Benefaction, 1742, which by the time of the Brougham Commission had increased the number of apprenticeships from 10, 1747-1755, to 20, 1810-20.

with a Captain Newman and, for a premium of £10, so was William Edwards to Samuel Butler, chemist. [44] The practice endured, but the funds were old ones.

The continued existence of interest free loan monies also owed much to gifts from an earlier age, although three such endowments were set up at the start of the nineteenth century. These were all made by the same donor, Paul Orchard, and the Charity Commission's observations on them suggest some reasons for the rarity of this kind of gift. Of the several parishes Orchard left money to, only St Philip and St Jacob were making successful use of it. St James hadn't yet made any loans, despite having had the money for nearly twenty years, perhaps due to the problems of finding trustworthy applicants able to put forward the necessary securities. St Nicholas had made some loans, one of which had not been returned in the agreed time-span, and the commissioners observed that 'there seems reason to apprehend that some, if not all of them, are in a precarious situation.' [45] Municipal loan funds were fraught with similar difficulties: in the case of default the Trustees would have to initiate legal proceeding against those who had put up bonds as surety for the loan. [46] The scarcity of this type of gift can therefore be understood in terms of its risk factor; default would either lead to court costs and inconvenience, or would wipe out the fund. A more cynical reading would suggest that there was also a strong incentive for trustees to plead 'difficulties', while watching interest accrue to the general parish account which they were not legally obliged to remit to the trust, since the terms establishing loan funds pre-supposed they would be interest-free.

It is worth noting that the idea of loan charity did endure into the nineteenth century in a slightly different form. The Bristol Loan Fund offered interest free loans 'for the promotion of economy and prudence among the labouring classes'. This had none of the ad hoc nature of an endowed trust. Applications were made at the Savings Bank, and repayments were made on the basis of one shilling in the pound per week. [47] Where the municipal and parish institutions proved inappropriate, the trustee savings bank was a more suitable vehicle for this kind of philanthropy.

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44 BMC MB vol 1 27/10/1837, 10/11/1837
45 Manchee I p.465, II p.197, 298.
46 BMC MB vol I 8/1/1837
47 *Matthews's* (1841) op. cit., p. 309, and see below, ch.7, for the Savings Bank and the Prudent Man's Friend Society.

c.v) Health

Charities concerned with health were not numerous, although endowments made to the voluntary hospitals increase in frequency in the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition to trust funds in support of medical institutions the category also includes gifts to lying-in women and doles for the blind. The funds for women in childbirth set up by Ann Thurston (1756) and Mary Ann Peloquin (1768) were in the gift of the Mayor's wife and confined to wives of freemen of the city. [48] Charity for the relief of the blind was the result of a particular enthusiasm of three individuals, Alderman Merlott, his wife Elizabeth and Richard Reynolds, who, between 1784 and 1806 established and augmented a fund which, by 1822, was generating £454 per annum., to be administered by the Corporation. There is a notable overlap with charity to the elderly here, for preference in the distribution of the £ 10 doles was given to blind applicants over seventy, and in any case the charity catered only to those over fifty. [49]

c.vi) Education

Endowments to schools are fairly consistent from the start of the eighteenth century, but as the city grew, so both private and subscriber funded education superseded the evolving system of parish charity schools financed through trusts. [50] There were three types of school involved with endowments. The large city-wide schools, such as the Red Maids School and the Grammar School, mostly founded in an earlier period, were under the supervision of either the Corporation or the Merchant Venturers. [51] Apart from the huge Colston benefaction of 1708 the trend for this type of school was for occasional gifts to be made to augment existing funds, such as the money left by Samuel Gist in 1808, which allowed a further three boys and three girls to join Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Red Maids School respectively, or the exhibition fund set up for the Grammar School in 1866 by John Naish Sanders. [52]

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48 Manchee I pp.103-4, 106-10; Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power, and the Poor in Eighteenth Century Bristol* (Cambridge, 1991) pp.91-2.

49 Manchee I pp. 104-5.

50 For a general survey of education in Bristol in the eighteenth century, see Jonathan Barry 'The Cultural Life of Bristol 1640-1775' (Oxford D.Phil thesis, 1985) ch.2.

51 For institutional histories, see C.Hill *The History of the Bristol Grammar School* (Bath, 1951); J.Vanes *Apparrelled in Red* (Gloucester, 1984); F.W.E.Bowen *Queen Elizabeth's Hospital,Bristol* (Clevedon, 1971).

52 Manchee I pp.19, 55, 174-6.

A second category was where schools were endowed by a congregation. The large numbers of gifts made in the second half of the eighteenth century in fact consist of a series of small donations made to fund the school in Stokes Croft for Protestant Dissenters. [53] This had actually been started by voluntary subscription and a trust had been created after the erection of the building, to which relatively minor capital sums, usually £ 50 or £ 100 were added. A related category was that of the parish schools. One such was established in St Nicholas in 1785, following the same pattern to that of the Protestant Dissenters, in that it was launched by subscription under the aegis of the vestry. Three endowments were made to augment the income from subscriptions, and the school seems to have functioned successfully until 1813. At this point, according to the Charity Commissioners, a National school was set up, and '..a decided preference was given by the parishioners to the instruction which was to be obtained there; so that by degrees the parish school above-mentioned was deserted, and fell into total disuse.' [54]

c.vii) Miscellaneous charities

There are so few of these that there is nothing to observe in the sense of general trends, other than to point to the fact that two of them date from the first decade of the nineteenth century and therefore contribute to the revival of endowed charity in this period. These were both sums to support prisoners, one supplying them with bread, meat and coals, the other set up for the release of small debtors. William Vick's 1753 donation to the Merchant Venturers is the only example of a trust established for civic works in the period surveyed. [55] The purpose was to start a fund which would eventually be sufficient to pay for a bridge over the Avon, linking Clifton to Leigh Woods; over one hundred years later Vick's objective was realised, with the opening of the Clifton Suspension Bridge, designed by Brunel. [56] Why the lack of interest in civic works ? Following the Mortmain Act of 1736 the courts were more reluctant to classify them as a form of charity, perhaps

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[53] Manchee I, pp.202-5; for eighteenth century charity schools see M.G.Jones *The Charity School Movement in the XVIII Century* (Cambridge, 1938); Derek Robson *Some Aspects of Education in Cheshire in the Eighteenth Century* (Chetham Soc. 3rd ser., xiii, 1966); Joan Simon 'Was there a Charity School Movement? The Leicestershire evidence' in Brian Simon ed. *Education in Leicestershire 1640-1940* (Leicester, 1968)

[54] Manchee II pp.197-9.

[55] Manchee I pp. 267-70; John Latimer *Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Bristol, 1893) pp.308-9.

[56] idem. *Annals of Bristol in the Nineteenth Century* (Bristol, 1887) pp.131-4.

deterring donors. [57] Otherwise, the testators' reluctance perhaps indicates that the conduct of public building schemes was now more properly seen as the province of the Corporation. [58]

d) The pattern of philanthropy.

This section will draw together the information presented above, to establish the trends it reveals, then make some preliminary observations on them. Above all, it is clear that endowed charity underwent a period of relative decline in the nineteenth century. This was not necessarily a financial decline, as some very large sums were endowed at the end of the sequence. However, the habit of making this type of charitable bequest was diminishing, nowhere more so than in gifts in the trust of the parish to support the church and provide doles to the poor.

The full extent of the failure of endowment becomes obvious when set in the broader context of public spending in the city. It would be helpful firstly to be able to compare the overall contributions of public and private support mechanisms in the town, allowing a perspective of endowment set against the rise in income from voluntary charity and the Poor Law. Unfortunately it is is only possible to guess at the amounts generated by voluntarism (ie. through subscription and donation). Previous estimates of such income are: in the 1770's £1,489 p.a, rising to £10,107 p.a. in 1830, £60,000 p.a. in 1851, and £ 91,000 p.a in 1894. [59] The former two are probably not comprehensive, and the latter probably inaccurate, nor do they break down the sums into the various target groups in a way that would ease comparison. The only source which does so is the 1884 *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor*, and Robert Humphreys has made use of this, and the Charity Commission report of 1873, to offer a comparison for the late Victorian period. [60] Humphreys' concern is limited to the question of whether the Poor Law outweighed charity in the amount spent on relief of the poor, and he determines that by this period it did, quite

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57 Gareth Jones op, cit., pp.122-7.

58 For example, the Council House, Exchange, and Bristol Bridge, see John Latimer *Annals ... Eighteenth Century* op. cit., pp.59-60, 118, 180, 218, 226, 334-6 and Walter Ison *The Georgian Buildings of Bristol* (London, 1952) pp.90-1, 95-105, 114-123; the Assembly Room and the Theatre Royal were financed by subscription, ibid., pp.109, 124.

59 For the 1770's Jonathan Barry 'The Cultural Life of Bristol 1640-1775' (Oxford D.Phil thesis, 1985) Table XIV; for 1830, Livock papers BRO 36771/73; for 1851. *Matthews's Directory* (1851) op cit.; for 1894 S.A.Barnett *Canon Barnett, His Life, Work and Friends* (London, 1918) vol II p.220.

60 Robert Humphreys *Bygone Charity - Myths and Realities* LSE Working Paper no. 23/94 (1994) pp.7-10.

substantially. [61] The exercise does throw up some methodological difficulties, such as that of geographical equivalence - should the Bristol endowments be set against only the Bristol Poor Law, or Clifton and Bedminster too ? - that of deciding on the basis of comparison - is Humphreys justified in excluding educational charity from his calculations ? - and that of accounting for unrecorded philanthropy to beggars and personal applicants - Humphreys ignores this, despite the (unsubstantiated) allusion in the Report to a possible sum of £50,000 p.a. dispensed informally. [62]

Bearing these difficulties in mind, *Figure 3.3* (over) compares the long-run performance of the Bristol poor rate with that of analogous endowments (those directed at the elderly, health and poor relief). It shows the annual income, averaged over the decade, from the poor rates and the trusts, with inflation adjustment to 1820's prices. [63] In addition, the income of the Infirmary is also shown, as the pre-eminent representative of the newer subscription charities (and one of the few for which full financial records can be traced). It is of course highly speculative, given the absence of a reliable total for endowment income before the Brougham Commission, but if it is used as a general indicator of comparative growth, it shows that while at the start of the eighteenth century the trusts played a greater role in the relief of poverty, it was taxation that was more able to meet the needs which demographic expansion and cyclical slumps produced over the long term. Only in the 1750's did rating begin to outstrip the older civic charities, and the trend did not become decisive until the Napoleonic Wars. While both indices show a marked response to the stresses which war and its aftermath placed on relief agencies from 1800 to 1820, public taxation could respond more flexibly to changing need. The increase in trust income 1820-1869 does not reflect a new commitment to this form of charity. Instead it was largely due to reforms of existing trusts set in motion by the Charity Commission, rather than a surge of new bequests.

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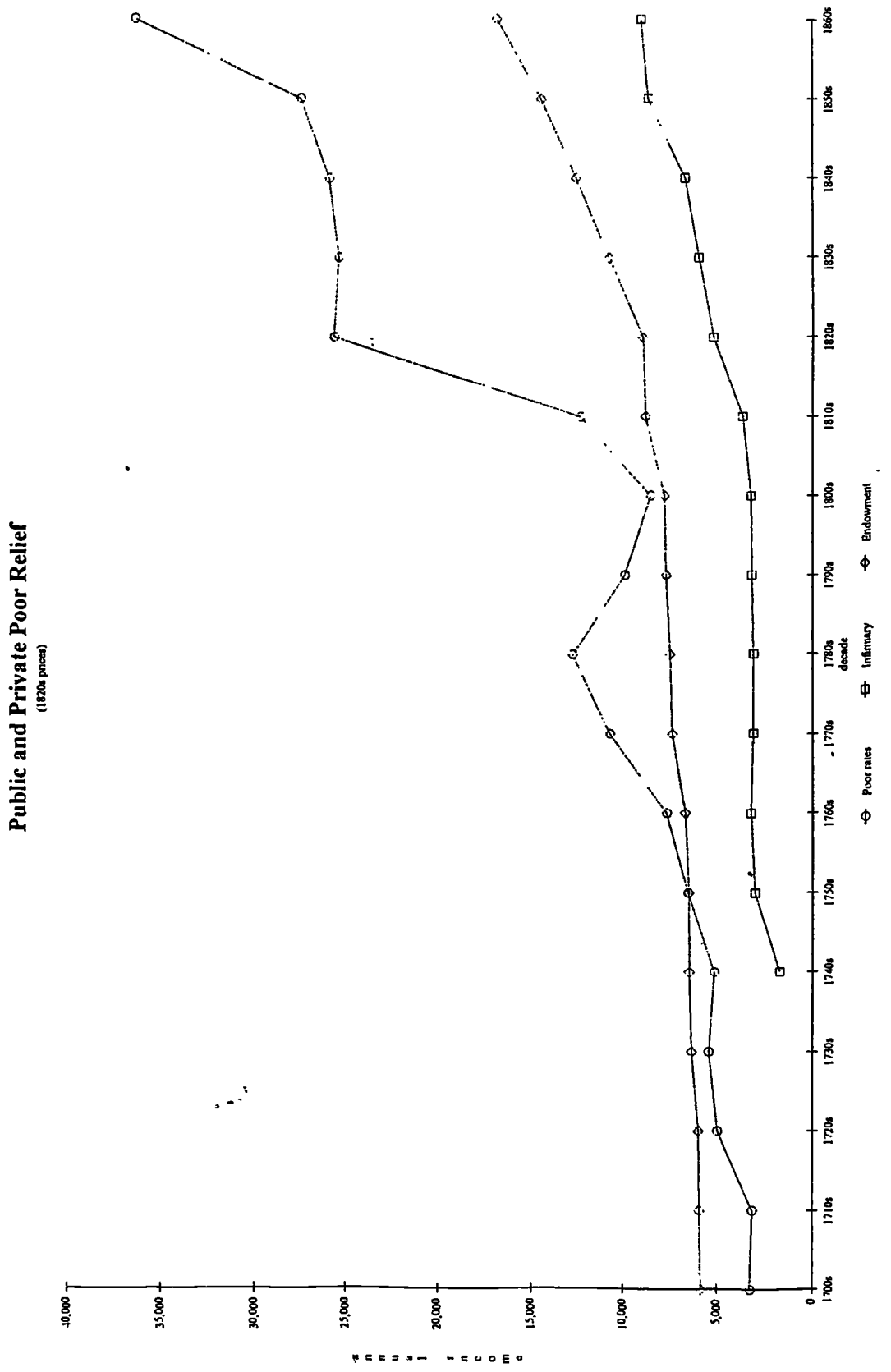
61 His calculations of income for the relief of the poor show: endowments (gross): £20,701, voluntary charities (gross) £ 12,100, Bristol, Bedminster and Clifton Poor Law out-relief (net) £ 41,072.

62 *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor* (Bristol, 1884) pp.179-80.

63 See Appendix I.

Fig. 3.3



Source: Charities: as for *Fig. 3.1*; Poor rates: as for *Table 2.2*; Infirmary: BRO 35893 21 a), b) c) d), e) *The State of the Bristol Infirmary* (1742-1873), and see Appendix 7.

Therefore, although the trend shown in this graph indicates the continuity of the trusts as a provider of poor relief, it also confirms their decline relative to other forms. Since endowment was by its nature perpetual and cumulative it could never be superseded completely by alternatives, but if a linear model of the evolution of poor relief were to be sought, then for Bristol the mid-eighteenth century was the time when the diminuition of the trust income as a proportion of total provision became irreversible.

Why should this have occurred ? There is a growing literature on the eighteenth century efflorescence of voluntarist charity, and it is tempting to conclude that potential donors were more attracted to the short-term rewards of subscription than the perpetuation of their gift through a trust. The social purpose of subscription, either to associations or institutions, has been located in the English 'urban renaissance' of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and specifically with the moulding of the elite within towns. As polite society relocated from a rural to urban setting so old wealth encountered the middling sorts. Historians are divided on whether associational life offered a chance for these groups to merge harmoniously or to differentiate sub-groups within the elite, such as dissenters, the 'independent bourgeoisie' or members of political parties. [64] In the apparently fluid society of the changing town, subscription was a register of status, differentiating the 'company' from the 'crowd', with control over such relief institutions as hospitals offering a new means of exercising paternalism. [65] These were the 'pull' factors, and Section III will discusses Bristol's voluntary charities in depth.

But, as noted above, historians have identified two forces - rising poor rates, and the corruption and maladministration of trusts - causing a 'push' away from endowment. Does the Bristol evidence support this picture ?

Firstly, what was the relationship between the poor rates and trends in charity ? Although the greater responsiveness of the rates to the rising scale of need is suggested in *Figure 3.3*, it seems that

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64 P.Borsay *The English Urban Renaissance, Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770* (Oxford, 1989) pp.267-283, 296-300; J.Brewer 'Commercialization and Politics' in N.McKendrick, J.Brewer, and J.Plumb *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (London, 1982); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall *Family Fortunes Men and women of the English middle class, 1780-1850* (London, 1987), pp.419-429; R.J.Morris 'Voluntary Societes and Bristish Urban Elites, 1780-1850:An Analysis', *The Historical Journal*, 26, I (1983) pp.95-118.

65 Roy Porter 'The gift relation...' Lindsay Granshaw and Roy Porter op. cit., esp. pp.152, 172.

contemporaries viewed the two systems as complementary and exclusive of each other. One of the points demonstrated by Jordan in his studies was that Bristol had an unusually high level of giving, second only to London in the range and value of urban charity provided. Yet by the late seventeenth century Bristol also had a comparatively high level of poor law activity, exceeding most other provincial towns in both the size of the rates, and the amount spent on out-relief. [66] Many of the wills establishing gifts for the poor acknowledge the existence of the rates and squarely address the question of how the two types of relief should co-exist. The merchant William Colston for example, in setting up a parish dole in 1681, specified that it '...be equally divided among six poor housekeepers, *not receiving alms of the parish...*' and this qualification featured regularly throughout the eighteenth century. [67] Rather than the rates undermining the tendency to endow, it appears that they enforced two distinct categories of 'poor' - deserving and undeserving of charity - though not necessarily in the sense of genuine and dissembling paupers.

To be deserving of parish charity meant being known to the trustees, the vestry, suggesting that the demise of parochial charity owed more to the changing role of the parish than to the growth of the rates. The Poor Law Union would pick up catastrophes, the urgent cases and the transient poor, while the charity doles would presumably go to supplement low income households, possibly favouring Anglicans, since choice of recipient was often '...as the minister and churchwardens should think fit'. [68] At the heart of both systems were the churchwardens, who not only wielded the power of vestry distribution of doles, but also held some responsibility for public relief. [69] Although Bristol parishes had long been united in the Corporation of the Poor for rating purposes, the churchwardens still participated in setting the rate and also received a proportion of the money

66 Paul Slack *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1988), pp.178, 181.
67 My italics: this was Christ-Church endowment, Manchee I p.332; for a selection of St James bequests with this wording, Manchee I pp.441, 444, 455, 456, 459, 464; or St Augustine, p.354, 355, 356, 357, 359, 360, 361, 363, 364, 365, 367, 371, 372, 376, 378, 381.
68 Robert Naylor's St. Augustine endowment, Manchee I p.360.
69 Summarised in Martin Gorsky 'Experiments in Poor Relief: Bristol 1816-1817' *The Local Historian* 25, no 1 (February 1995)pp.17-8, pp.28-9.

levied for giving as parish out-relief. [70] This situation began to change in the 1820's, and Chapter 5 will probe the relationship between parish and poor in more depth.

Also, if the rates were genuinely a negative influence, 'crowding out' private philanthropy, then gifts to the poor could be expected to disappear from wills and deeds. This was not the case. Although endowed trusts declined in number, testators did not abandon the habit of giving to the poor in their wills, they simply chose a different form. The gifts of three Bristol donors will illustrate the point. Richard Reynolds has already been mentioned, as a member of the pantheon of Bristol philanthropists whose name was regularly invoked in speeches and sermons as an inspiration to the wealthy. [71] By deed in 1809 he set up an endowment, funded by several properties in Wales, to generate money in support of a variety of voluntary charities: the Bristol Infirmary, the Bristol Samaritan Society, the Stranger's Friend Society, the Society for the Discharge of Persons Confined for Small Debts, the Bristol Dispensary and the Bristol Female Misericordia. [72] Reynolds was closely involved with the benevolent associations that flourished at the time, and clearly saw that they offered a chance to adapt the older style endowments to the new medium.

The 1836 will of Thomas Whippie, a `liberal benefactor' of Clifton Wood, reveals how the development of voluntary institutions raised an opportunity cost consideration for testators who might previously have endowed. Recipients of Whippie's generosity were: £500, Wesleyan Missionary Society for the West Indies; £500, Church of England Society; £1,000, Clifton Dispensary; £500, for extension of Wesleyan Methodism in Clifton; £100, Moravian Mission Society; £50, Bristol Asylum for the Blind; £100, Stranger's Friend Society; £100, General Hospital; £100, Superannuated Wesleyan Preachers Society. [73]

It may be argued that the non-conformity of the Quaker Reynolds and the Methodist Whippie make them untypical, in that they would be less willing to give to the trust of parish or Corporation,

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[70] See 'An Analysis of the Report of the Commissioners of Corporate Enquiry for the City and County of Bristol' (Bristol, 1835) pp.19-20, collected in J.B.Kington *A Burgess's Letters* (Bristol, 1836); Jonathan Barry 'The parish in civic life: Bristol and its churches 1640-1750' S.J.Wright ed. op. cit., pp.168-9; Martin Gorsky 'Experiments in Poor Relief' op. cit.

[71] See above, Section I, Introduction, and also, soon after Reynold's death, a report of the meeting of the Reynolds Commemoration Society, *Bristol Mercury* 9/12/1816.

[72] Manchee op. cit., I pp.105, 227-31; Richard Tompson op. cit., p.72; see also David Owen op. cit., pp.79-80.

[73] *Bristol Gazette* 1/9/1836.

which represented the Anglican establishment. However, the will of George Thomas in 1869 suggests that even after reform had removed the municipal charities from the 'corrupt' hands of the Corporation the benevolent testator was still more attracted to voluntarism. Thomas, a member of both the Corporation and Bristol Municipal Charity Trustees, and one of the town's richest men, might at first sight appear to have been likely to establish a trust, when he died in 1869. In fact he chose different beneficiaries: £2000, Bristol Royal Infirmary; £2000, the General Hospital; £2000, the British and Foreign Bible Society; £2000, the British and Foreign Schools Society; £500, Bristol Guardian House: £500, Bristol Refuge; £500, Bristol Stranger's Friend Society; £800, Boys' Daily School (Friends); £800, Boys' First Day School (Friends); £250, Girls' First Day School (Friends); £200, Adult School. [74] Rather than a generalised gift to the poor, Thomas, like Whippie and Reynolds, had chosen immediate and specific targets which suited his own enthusiasms. This evidence points to the rise of voluntarism, rather than the rise of the rates as the key determinant in the decline of endowment.

The endowed trust therefore gave way to a new form of legacy. Indeed, it was common for the major institutions such as Bristol Infirmary to include a *pro forma* bequest in their annual reports to encourage potential benefactors. [75] There was no trust established, no designated recipients, no delegated day of distribution, no perpetuation of the donor's memory. A lump sum bequest simply went to the hospital governors to spend as they saw fit. It would be strange if this new flow of testatory charity had not diverted giving away from the more traditional trusts. Contemporary evidence that the Infirmary was viewed more favourably than the older charities comes from a publication of 1775, which described it in these terms:

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74 J.Nicholls *Bristol Biographies: Life of George Thomas* (Bristol, 1870).

75 BRO 35893 21 a), c) d), e) *The State of the Bristol Infirmary*; the wording of the legacy in 1800 was: 'I Give and Bequeath to AB and CD the Sum of...upon Trust, that they pay the same to the TREASURER for the Time being, of the BRISTOL INFIRMARY, which Sum I charge upon my personal Estate, and desire it may be applied to the Charitable Use of the said INFIRMARY'.

'It is founded on a plan the least liable of any to be abused and perverted, viz. that of yearly subscriptions, and has accordingly been so well conducted as to meet with the assistance of most of the opulent inhabitants of Bristol and its environs..'. [76]

To summarise, while there is no clear evidence that the escalating burden of the poor rates deterred givers, the changing role of the parish, as nexus of both charity and out-relief bears further investigation. The appearance of new institutions siphoned away wealth which might previously have been endowed. Reference in the preceding quotation to other funds being 'abused and perverted' coincides neatly with the received historical wisdom on the rise of corruption, prompting donors to favour charities which would act with the greatest propriety. Other reasons can be inferred for the switch to voluntary institutions: their role in the associational life of the town, their specific religious, social and political meanings for the men and women who had been involved in them, and their greater freedom of action under the law in comparison to the more tightly restricted trusts. [77]

Will this explanation suffice ? For all their virtues, it is by no means clear that the benefits of the new charities outweighed the costs of the old. The great strength of endowed charity was its self-perpetuating nature; once a gift of this sort was made then it produced a return, year in, year out. By contrast, those which were funded by subscription could not be certain of their future income. A typical pattern was for a first flush of success, as a group of motivated individuals encouraged enthusiasm and money towards the cause of the moment, then a gradual loss of momentum, as the originators moved on or died, and new causes came to the fore. [78]

As we will see, the greater reliability of trusts *was* offset in the early nineteenth century by a certain amount of dishonest and incompetent trusteeship, but these problems had begun to be rectified with the establishment of the Commission in 1819. Open accounting and the correction of past abuses was the raison d'etre of this body, whose 18-year investigation entailed the scrutiny of all

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[76] Anon *An Account of Hospitals, Alms-houses and Public Schools in Bristol* (Bristol 1775); Kathleen Wilson has found this to be a common claim of hospital government, see 'Urban Culture and Political Activism in Hanoverian England: The Example of Voluntary Hospitals', in Eckhart Hellmuth ed. *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990), esp. pp.172-3, 180-1.

[77] Richard Tompson op. cit., pp.68-72; Section III explores the positive appeal of voluntary charity in more detail.

[78] See below, Chapter 9 b).

original deeds and bequests to assess subsequent trustee performance. [79] The exercise had shown that the endowments most vulnerable to distortion of donors' original intentions were those based on property; Bristol offered various examples of this, such as alienation of parcels of land by a rapacious corporation and leasing on over-generous terms to vestrymen and their cronies. Once the Charity Commission had completed its work, and effectively brought the trusts into the public domain, their honest management was assured. Striking increases in trust income were recorded in testimony to these changes: between the Enquiries of 1819-37 and 1867-76, income from Bristol trusts increased by £ 18,587 p.a. [80] Despite this improvement, we have seen that the seventy years following the establishment of the Commission witnessed the lowest number of new endowed trusts established.

The mid-eighteenth century had seen another development which actually enhanced the attraction of the charitable trust. Up till this point income from endowment was typically generated by property, with all its attendant problems, such as fabric deterioration over the long-term, and the venal letting policy of some trustee-landlords, which failed to take full advantage of rising land values. However the 'Financial Revolution' brought about the move to investment in government stock, with the period 1720-1750 witnessing the arrival in the National Debt of trustee accounts, many of them charitable, following its restructuring in the wake of the South Sea Bubble. [81] Henceforth the growing market in securities offered donors a steady, predictable return with none of the pitfalls of endowing property. [82]

Conclusion

The decline of endowed charity presents a paradox. Why did it occur at just the time when state supervision and improved investment opportunities should have stimulated it ? Reliability, predictability, permanence were the hallmarks of endowment, post-Charity Commission. Here was a form of charity with manifest benefits, and yet if the timetable of reform is set against trends in

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79 Richard Tompson op. cit., pp.186-198.

80 PP. 1877 lxvi pp. 34-5; the national improvement was £ 524,039 p.a.

81 P.Dickson *The Financial Revolution in England* (London, 1967) pp.283-4, 299-300.

82 This raises the question of the impact of the Mortmain Act on endowed charity, see Gareth Jones op. cit., chs. vi, ix, and Meg Whittle op. cit., p.5; the Bristol evidence suggests that it did not deter donors from establishing trusts, but that it did encourage the trend to leaving personal rather than real estate.

Figures 3.1 and *3.2* there is no congruence. The start of decline can be traced to the mid-eighteenth century, yet this pre-dated the calls for reform and investigation In the early 1800s, when concern about corruption was supposedly prompting Parliamentary enquiry there was a brief recovery in number and value of endowments. When the benefits of reform were becoming clear, from the 1830s, they fell to a new low. It is the reverse of what might be expected if concern with corruption was the key determinant. By opting for subscription charity rather than endowment the beneficent were defying economic logic by eschewing the opportunity to make a gift in perpetuity.

There is therefore a problem with a *post hoc* explanation which presents the decline of endowed charity as the inevitable process of supersession of the old and inefficient by the new and improved. As an effective means of delivering charity, the endowed trust was actually becoming more viable at the time of its demise - there was no functional imperative undermining it. If the changing attitudes of donors are to be understood, then enquiry must look beyond rationalised notions of economic choice, and turn instead to the specific meanings that different kinds of charities held for the citizen. In particular it must ask why the argument that charity administration had become corrupt held such sway in early nineteenth century Bristol.

Chapter 4.

The Politics of Charity

The previous chapter suggested that the causative role of corruption should not be assumed, either as the progenitor of the reform of endowed charity, or of its decline. There was undoubtedly *some* malversation on the part of trustees in the early nineteenth century, yet there was nothing new about this aspect of endowed trusts. Once reform of the charities was put in train it transpired that the two most glaring examples of Corporation property mismanagement, Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Trinity Hospital, had occurred in 1600 and 1617 respectively. The controversies of the 1830s and 1840s were not simply a case of eighteenth century 'Old Corruption' meeting enlightened reform; there had always been divergences from the strict letter of charitable trusts. [1] The historical problem is not so much to explain the existence of abuses, but rather to ask why endowed trusts came under attack, and why there was a receptive audience for these attacks.

The answer to this lies in electoral politics, in particular the agenda of Radical reform agitation, where the charities question became an important weapon for promoting change. Charity corruption emerged as a prominent issue in local politics *not* because it was an issue of pressing popular concern, but because of its metaphorical power: its use was primarily symbolic of changing social and political realities. Although 'reform' - the Charity Commission and the Municipal Corporations Act - did bring increased income to the trusts, it is by no means clear that this can be attributed to new men infused with a new ethic of accountability and probity. Nor can the reformers' charges of financial maladministration on the part of the old Corporation be detached from the partisan infighting of Liberals and Tories in the 1830s and 1840s. In the case of Bristol the political debate over charity corruption did not so much reflect the reality of decline and disenchantment, as help to shape it.

Two interrelated arguments will be put forward. First, endowed charity's place in public discourse will be tracked, to demonstrate that its presence was closely linked to the quest for advantage in electoral politics. Secondly, the Liberal Trustees who took over control of the

1 Gareth Jones *History of the Law of Charity 1532-1827* (Cambridge, 1969) pp.18-19, 52.

Corporation's charities after municipal reform will be compared to their Tory predecessors. They will emerge as a rival political elite, whose interest in the charities was driven not by a yearning to benefit needy recipients, but rather by the urge to grasp a vital lever of local government power. The conclusion will suggest some implications for the decline of endowed charity.

a) Charity administration and party politics: i) before 1835

There was an inevitability about the entangling of endowed charity with local electoral politics. Benefactors needed to leave their wealth to a permanent body, a vestry or Corporation, yet in so doing they added to the power of closed political institutions. In the eighteenth century accusations by vanquished candidates that the other side had bribed voters with the Corporation charities were a recurrent feature of national elections in Bristol, the charge being made by the Whigs John Scrope in 1734 and Henry Cruger in 1781. [2] The use of charity enquiries as a political weapon also had a long history, dating back at least to the threat of a Commission of Charitable Uses made by the Bishop of Bristol to the Corporation in 1676. [3] A century later *An Account of the Hospitals, Almshouses and Public Schools in Bristol* (1775) also used the charities to make barely concealed digs at Corporation management. [4] This pamphlet purported to be an informative document detailing several charities, mostly in the gift of the Corporation, and though superficially apolitical there were heavy hints of a hidden agenda. [5] For example, the probity of the Infirmary's management was stressed, the workhouse was praised for averting '..any design of misapplications..a case that too often occurs in handling the public's money', and the rights of dissenters to claim on particular funds were emphasized. [6] Bristol Grammar School also attracted comment. [7] Dubious administration was

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2 BRO Common Council Proceedings 1722-1738, pp.376-9, Speaker's warrant; see also N.Rogers *Whigs and Cities: Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt* (Oxford, 1989) pp.279-80; BRL *Bristol Poll Books 1781-1832*, Election Petition March 12th. 1781.

3 J.F.Nicholls & John Taylor *Bristol: Past and Present Volume III Civil and Modern History* (Bristol, 1882), pp.68-9

4 *An Account of the Hospitals, Almshouses and Public Schools in Bristol* (Bristol, 1775) printed by H.Farley, collected in *Bristol Tracts* vol xxxix.

5 It may be that the fallout of the 1774 election of Whigs Cruger and Burke was a factor; the defeated Tories had petitioned unsuccessfully to have the poll annulled on the grounds of corrupt electioneering, see John Latimer *Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Bristol, 1893) pp.409-11.

6 *An Account of the Hospitals* op. cit., and see above for the political symbolism of Infirmary probity, Chapter 3, note 76; dissenters, see entries on Trinity Hospital, Stokes Croft Almshouse and Alderman Stevens Charity.

7 R.Tompson *The Charity Commission and the Age of Reform* (London, 1979), pp. 79, 246, refers to the formation of a committee to investigate charity abuses in Bristol in 1737, though from the source cited this appears to have been a committee established by the Corporation to revise the book of orders of the Free Grammar School, and which, for example, confirmed that George White's exhibition had been regularly paid since its inception: C.Hill *The History of the Bristol Grammar School* (Bath, 1951) pp. 29-31; Manchee I p.35.

highly visible: in 1766 the Corporation had exchanged the Grammar School's premises for those of the superior site of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, to the detriment of the pauper children in the latter school. [8] In 1803 a group of Grammar School old boys petitioned the Corporation to reverse the actions of headmaster Richard Lee who had not only virtually eradicated free scholars from the institution, but was on the way to shedding the fee-paying boarders as well and converting his position to a sinecure. The Corporation was unwilling to take action and the fortunes of the school languished until the era of the Charity Trustees. [9]

These nagging concerns were transformed into a major electoral issue in Henry 'Orator' Hunt's 1812 election campaigns in Bristol. [10] Hunt's platform was the Radical critique of 'Old Corruption', an attack on the Westminster patronage system which contended that self- interest determined policy, rather than the public good. Hence the evil of the large national debt to fund the placemen, and the burden of taxes on the poor required to service it. The association of charity administration with a conspiracy of vested interests provided Hunt with an ideal means of dramatising these themes to the Bristol electorate.

The 'Orator's' strategy was to characterise the local charities as the fund for the corrupt life-style of the Bristol Corporation, an example in microcosm of his main theme, the public purse abused for individual gain. A pre-election pamphlet contained a 23-page list of local charities, mostly those entrusted to the Corporation, detailing capital sums and target applicants. [11] The premise was that charity funds represented common rights that had been quietly suppressed in the interest of the ruling elite. Hunt hoped the campaign for electoral reform had stimulated in his supporters: '.. a resolution to look into your own concerns; to trace back your rights to their origin; and to act as becomes men who entertain a just sense of those rights.' [12] Two defeats, first in the July by-election,

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8 J.W.Arrowsmith *Dictionary of Bristol* (Bristol, 1906) p.169; Graham Bush *Bristol and its Municipal Government 1820-1851* (Bristol, 1976), p.65; concern for the probity of this action followed the subsequent marriage of the Grammar School's headmaster to the daughter of one of the aldermen,

9 C.Hill op. cit., pp. 61-63.

10 Henry Hunt *Memoirs of Henry Hunt* vol II and III (1821) edn. New York 1970, vol II pp.495-568, vol. III pp.1-136; also Mark Harrison *Crowds and History* (Cambridge, 1988), pp.209-19; John Belchem *'Orator' Hunt: Henry Hunt and English Working Class Radicalism* (Oxford, 1985) pp.34-41; Peter Brett 'The Liberal Middle Classes and Politics in three provincial towns - Newcastle, Bristol and York - c.1812-1841' unpublished Ph.D thesis University of Durham (1991), pp.86-96.

11 Henry Hunt *A Letter from Mr Hunt to the Freemen of Bristol* (London, March 1812).

12 Ibid., p.3.

then in the general election, only flamed Hunt's ardour. [13] Unwilling to concede his failure he launched an election petition which accused both the Whig, Protheroe and the Tory, Davis, of bribery, intimidation and treating.

The furore surrounding the petition prompted a more explicit account of the vulnerability of endowed charity to political chicanery. Hunt characterised the party system as little more than a confidence trick perpetrated on the voters by the elite: 'All the corporation, all the merchants, all the tradesmen, all the clergy and priests, whether of the church of England or of the numberless sects of dissenters..were volunteers to uphold the most corrupt and profligate system of election that ever disgraced the rottenest of rotten boroughs.' [14] Central to the argument was the belief that a vast tide of popular support was restrained from a free vote: 'Hundreds upon hundreds came to say that they were anxious to vote for me, but if they did so they would lose their bread and their families would be ruined.' [15] Whether 'bread' is interpreted strictly or as a general reference to parish doles, Hunt's inference is clear: the Corporation and vestries were using the threat of witholding charities in their gift in order to buy votes. He explained how trust property was also prey to venal interest:

> 'In the first place, the original property is in most instances granted out upon long leases, or upon lives, for a mere nominal premium and nominal rent, to the tools and dependants of the Corporation. In truth almost all the Corporation, all their dirty instruments, and the major part of their parsons and lawyers, are tenants. Large sums of money are lent by the Corporation, to the members of the Corporation, at mere nominal interest. Almost all the merchants and tradesmen of the city hold something under the Corporation, and at the time of the elections are their abject tools.' [16]

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13 The general election result was: Davis (Tory) 2,910; Protheroe (Whig) 2,435; Romilly (Whig) 1,685; Hunt (Radical) 456 - see A.Beaven *Bristol Lists* (Bristol, 1899) p. 171.

14 Henry Hunt *Memoirs* op. cit., II pp. 528, 530.

15 Ibid p. 544; interestingly, Henry Brougham, later to inspire the first Charity Commission, ran for Liverpool in 1812, and after his defeat suggested '...we ran them very near, but the fear of losing their bread made many a poor creature vote aginst us with tears ... gold carried the day', British Museum, Add.Ms. 38108 fol.60, cited in Arthur Aspinall *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party* (Manchester, 1927) p.29.

16 Ibid., III pp. 131-2.

Hunt's petition failed, but his efforts did yield a more permanent legacy of the attempt to politicize charity. This was a book written by a member of his election committee, John Cranidge, entitled *A Mirror for the Burgesses and Commonalty of the City of Bristol.* [17] Though prefaced by a poem darkly admonishing the Trustees against witholding 'thy neighbour's due', Cranidge failed to provide any damning evidence of malversation. [18] However, he carefully aligned the charities issue with the interest of the middle classes by stressing its relationship to the poor rates. The survey of the charities was prefaced with the hope that: '..should it in any wise lead to a Reduction of the Parochial Rates and Public Taxes, the end for which it is designed will be obtained.' [19] To drive the point emphatically home Cranidge ended each section on parish charities with a note of how much that parish had paid in the most recent poor rate assessment, presumably so the reader could contrast the escalating rates with the abundance of the trusts, if only they were conscientiously applied. [20]

Early nineteenth century Radicalism therefore put charity onto Bristol's political agenda as an issue which concerned all citizens outside the elite of power. Hunt's popular backing is indicated by a surviving list of his 235 voters in the 1812 by-election; it seems that the small artisans and builders were the source of his support, with cordwainers, carpenters, tailors and masons forming the largest sub-groups. [21] He was also aiming at the voteless, to whom corrupt electioneering was academic, but depriving them of their rightful dues was not. [22] Hunt told them that a more honest charity policy would mean 'there would not be citizen of Bristol that would not be handsomely provided for out of these funds.' [23] In this populist rhetoric 'the people' were pitted against the merchants, tradesmen, parsons and lawyers, who wielded political power through an unjust franchise and a corrupt electoral system. [24] Thanks to Hunt and Cranidge the question of charity

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17 J.Cranidge *A Mirror for the Burgesses and Commonalty of the City of Bristol* (Bristol, 1818).

18 Though direct assaults on other types of malpractice were made, for example against the Corporation's overcharging for rental of market space and letting its estates at below market rate to favoured citizens, ibid. pp. 181-2, 198-9.

19 Ibid. preamble.

20 Ibid., pp.13-14.

21 Henry Hunt op. cit., III pp.7-12; J.Belchem op. cit., p. 49 analyses Hunt's support.

22 For the significance of the unenfranchised citizen in pre-Reform electoral politics, see Frank O'Gorman 'Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies: the Social Meaning of Elections in England 1780-1860', *Past and Present* 135, (1992) pp.79-105, esp. p.81.

23 Henry Hunt op. cit., III p. 135.

24 Hunt repeated his message in Bristol in 1816, see M.Gorsky 'Experiments in Poor Relief: Bristol 1816-1817' *The Local Historian* 25, 1 (1995) pp.17-30, Mark Harrison op. cit., pp.119, 125, 150, 155; David Large *Radicalism in Bristol in the Nineteenth Century* (Bristol, 1981) pp.8-9; his visits to the city were acknowledged by Henry Vincent, over twenty years later, to have been a formative influence on Bristol Chartism, see J.Cannon *The Chartists in Bristol* (Bristol, 1964) p.2.

administration was becoming wedded to municipal reform in the public mind, and endowed charity, once a symbol of reciprocal obligation between rich and poor, now began to represent the gulf between rulers and ruled.

In the interval between Hunt's campaigns and the Munical Corporations Act charity slipped from view as an electoral issue, no doubt because the activities of the Brougham Commission could be easily evoked to quell any public doubts. However, its lingering potential as a weapon in reform politics remained, as a few examples will show. In 1827 for instance, a London publishing firm produced *Rights of the Poor*, a digest of the Charity Commission report on the Bristol trusts, which was more critical than Cranidge of the Corporation's handling of educational endowments and loan charities. [25] Like Hunt, the author viewed the endowed charities as a customary right; since most had been 'grossly perverted' they needed the 'talisman of publicity' so that they might resume their place in relieving poverty. [26]

At the level of national politics the Whigs made use of charity malversation in their campaign for the reform of local government. The 1830 Select Committee held as the precursor to John Cam Hobhouse's Select Vestries Act, concerned itself in part with parochial charities, and called for evidence from Bristol in the course of proceedings. [27] The questioning of Lionel Bigg, vestry clerk to All Saints, and William Fripp, alderman for the ward of St Mary Redcliffe, was pointedly geared to establishing the involvement of the vestries in the electoral process. [28] Asked about charity distribution to loyal voters Bigg frankly acknowledged that since '...vestries are composed of, persons of all tempers, some having more party spirit than others ... it may be possible that just after the conclusion of an election there may be some little distinction.' [29] Here then was the issue

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25 Anon *Rights of the Poor, Charities of Bristol* (London, 1827) collected in BRO *Bristol Pamphlets* vol IV: the printers, W.Simpkin and R.Marshall, also published 'The Cabinet Lawyer' a 'popular digest of the Laws of England', the author of which was also responsible for 'Rights of the Poor'; quote p.110-1, criticisms, pp.76, 91-2, 106-7.

26 Ibid., 'Address'.

27 The Act introduced an adoptive process for democratisation of the select or 'closed' vestries, see Robert E.Zegger *John Cam Hobhouse, A Political Life, 1819-1852* (Columbia, 1973); W.Tate *The Parish Chest* (Cambridge, 1946) pp.22-3; Sidney and Beatrice Webb *English Local Government: Statutory Authorities for Special Purposes* (London, 1922) p.449.

28 PP 1830 iv pp. 662-64 *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee on Select and Other Vestries* 11th March 1830; each vestry had an alderman formally attached to provide a link with the Corporation. An alderman represented a ward, of which there were twelve, and therefore might be responsible for more than one vestry, since there were nineteen parishes.

29 Ibid., p.665.

articulated at the heart of Reform politics, in the measure which Hobhouse later described as '...not a bad pilot balloon for the great act of 1832'. [30]

It was therefore natural that the matter should arise in the debate preceding the Municipal Corporations Act. Though initially ignored in the Bristol report of the Commissioners of Corporate Enquiry, charity was debated when the Corporation presented its petition against the Bill before the House of Lords, to be met with a counter petition in favour from the 'Burgesses and Commonalty'. [31] The Corporation and its solicitors stressed the approval they had received from the Brougham Commissioners, the regular audit of charity accounts, and the cost implications of moving administration to a Trustee body. [32] The counter-petitioners pointed out that the Corporation charities were largely distributed on the recommendation of Churchwardens whom they characterised as 'ex officio' Tory election agents; inevitably then '...poor electors generally look upon their political subserviency as the best title which they can prefer to these gifts. [33]

While it is unlikely that this debate influenced the pro- or anti-reform camps, it clearly revealed the extent to which Hunt's argument had been absorbed by the city's Liberals. In the twenty-five years since Hunt had first seized on the theme, charity had been transformed from a marginal matter to a central concern of Bristol party politics. And yet, as shown in Chapter 3, this had occurred at a time when new endowments were made with more frequency and generosity than they had been in the late eighteenth century.

b) Charity administration and party politics: ii) after 1835

In the fifteen years following the passage of the Municipal Corporations Act the question of charity administration had an extremely high profile in national and local elections in Bristol. Why was this, and how do we account for its disappearance ? It did *not* arise from a distinct approach to social policy associated with the Liberals. Instead it should be understood in the context of the extreme party animosity of the 1830s and 1840s, when the 'reform' section of Bristol's elite sought to

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30 Lord Broughton (John Cam Hobhouse) *Recollections of a Long Life* Volume I p.131, cited in Robert E.Zegger op. cit., p.154.

31 PP 1835 xxiv pp.482-579 *English Municipal Commission: Report on the City and Council of Bristol*; Graham Bush op. cit., ch.6; see also J.B.Kington op. cit., which includes 'An Analysis...' of the report.

32 'Petition from the Corporation' collected in J.Kington op. cit. 'Municipal Corporation Reform Bill', 'proceedings having especial reference to Bristol', pp. 2-3; *House of Lords Journal* 5th August 1835; also collected in J.B.Kington, pp.4-34..

33 Collected in J.B.Kington op. cit., pp.34-40.

seize the reins of power on the back of local government changes, while the Tories strove to retain their position. [34] Reform allowed the true picture of charity mismanagement to emerge, but the potency of the issue in dramatising the fissure within the elite rapidly obscured the actual and heightened the symbolic.

The signal for a bitter party dispute was the section of the Municipal Corporations Act which provided that after August 1836 the Lord Chancellor should appoint new trustees for charities previously under the administration of the Corporation, on the basis of a local petition. An angry debate ensued on the composition of the trustee body, followed by a tussle between the predominantly Liberal trustees and the predominantly Tory Council over the recovery of the charity funds. [35] The Liberals put forward a petition to the Lord Chancellor, suggesting a board of Charity Trustees eighteen-strong, half Tory, half Liberal, but the consensus approach was upset by a Chancery decision, which recommended an uneven number of members, thus opening the question to partisan concerns; the Liberals then responded by claiming the additional trustee for themselves. [36] Piqued that they, as the majority party in the Council were not to dominate the body, the Tories declined to participate further in the selection process, presumably in the hope that this would stall it. They had miscalculated. The Liberals submitted a further, successful petition, which resulted in the nomination of the Bristol Municipal Charity Trustees, who now consisted of eighteen Liberals and a mere three Tories. [37]

Bristol's Liberals were not motivated primarily by the desire to cleanse charity administration. Consideration of the developing political landscape suggests instead that their capture of the board was part of a broader electoral strategy. [38] Liberal optimism at the prospect of increased influence

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34 The national party political considerations of the Municipal Corporations Act are analysed in G.B.A.M.Finlayson 'The Politics of Municipal Reform, 1835' *English Historical Review* lxxxi (1966) pp.673-692.

35 Graham Bush op. cit., pp.148-9, 155-6; Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* pp.230-6; Peter Brett op. cit., pp.299-300. Chroniclers of individual endowed schools have tended to analyse events from the vantage of their particular enthusiasm, see eg. C.Hill op. cit., pp. 74-7; F.W.E.Bowen op. cit., p.64.

36 For the flavour of local politics post-1835, G.B.A.M.Finlayson op. cit., p.692; Derek Fraser *Urban Politics in Victorian England: the structure of politics in Victorian cities* (Leicester, 1976), Introduction.

37 Peter Brett op. cit., pp.177, 288, 299, has unearthed evidence of close links between local Liberals and the Westminster leadership which may explain this; most notably a letter from one of the Trustees, William Pyle Taunton, to Lord Brougham in February 1837, complaining of Tory vestry abuse of charity funds in elections, a phenomenon Brougham himself would no doubt remember: see note 15 above.

38 Peter Brett op. cit., p.298

ushered in by the Municipal Corporations Act had rapidly dissipated, primarily as a result of the decisions of the boundary commissioners who visited Bristol to redraw the wards in the now expanded electoral district (Bristol Council was now to represent Clifton and Bedminster too). The forty-eight seats were allocated amongst the wards, which conformed to parish boundaries, on the basis of the number of rated houses they contained. This gave a disproportionately large number of seats to Clifton, St Augustine and St Michael, where the Tories were stronger, against the populous wards of St James, Bedminster and St Philip where the Liberals were dominant. [39] The result of the first election gave ample ammunition to those who viewed this as a naked gerrymander. While the Liberals had won a majority of the total vote, the parties each held twenty four seats. [40] Their situation was further undermined in the aldermanic elections, when the defection of one of the old Whigs, Christopher George, ensured that twelve Tories were chosen, and only three Liberals. [41] There was therefore a compelling reason to fight for representation on all possible committees to ensure Liberal influence was exerted. The Charity Trustees could be of political significance within this context: the patronage attached to the funds and the property was substantial; the association of Liberal councillors with some of the city's celebrated institutions could provide an electorally beneficial image; honest Liberal stewardship could be publicised to highlight the defects of Tory administration under the old system.

That the new Charity Trustees had every intention of exploiting their position for political gain became abundantly clear in the general election of 1837. The *Bristol Mercury* was the chief mouthpiece of the Liberal campaign, and made charity corruption central to its vigorous editorial attack on the Tories that crowed over their loss of lying-in gifts, doles and school places: 'All this immense patronage they have lost..' [42] As the campaign intensified the newspaper became more overt and intemperate: 'We leave the admitted facts that eighteen out of twenty-one of the Charity

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39 John Latimer *Annals... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., pp. 208-211; Peter Brett op. cit., pp.297-8; Graham Bush op. cit., pp. 116-21.

40 Ibid., p.121, though Bush cautions, note 34, that his figure for the total popular vote - Liberal 1,946, Tory 1,820 - may be suspect.

41 *Ibid., pp. 122-3*; John Latimer *Annals... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., pp. 211-2; these were critical to the power struggle as the aldermen were elected for six years by the council and could therefore tilt the balance of numbers in a town like Bristol where the parties split equally.

42 *Bristol Mercury* 8/7/1837.

Trustees are good, straight-forward Liberals; and that in the distribution of their vast funds, they will be sure NOT to reward a single Tory vote.' [43] The ambiguity of the statement was no doubt intentional, but the Conservative *Journal* was quick to interpret it as an unblushing attempt to intimidate voters. [44] The *Mercury* was unrepentant in its last edition before the poll, printing a poem which savagely lampooned Corporation charity administration:

'...And from Peloquin's gifts the means shall be found,
To keep a full stock in our vaults underground,
At the corner of Broad Street of wine of each sort -
Champaign and Madeira, Hock, Sherry and Port.
....But we, my good sir, never feel any qualms
To take from the poor what is left them in alms.' [45]

Now the association of the charities with corruption, which had begun with Hunt and the Radicals as a means of attacking the town's elite, and had then been co-opted by the Liberals as a means of attacking the Tories, was to become a weapon of the Conservatives for attacking the Liberals. After the Liberal victory the Tory *Journal* had been quick to explain the loss of the second Conservative seat in terms of the 'shameful prostitution of the Charities of Bristol' by the new trustees, who were using the funds for bribery.[46] Meanwhile the *Mercury* was quick to crow at the 'destructive crush of Tory influence' that had resulted from their loss of the 'power of misappropriating the Charity trusts.' [47] Was this mere bluster ? Investigation of the distribution of the Peloquin and Whitson gifts in 1833, 1834 and 1835 showed that out of 232 gifts made, 184 went to freemen who had split their votes between the two Tories. [48] The margin separating Berkeley from Fripp was a mere 56 votes, so the newspaper's assertion is perfectly possible, though not

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43 Ibid., 15/7/1837
44 *FFBJ* 22/7/1837.
45 *Bristol Mercury* 22/7/1837, 'Dialogue: Between some Tory Canvassers and Whig Voter, July 1837'.
46 *FFBJ* 29/7/1837.
47 Ibid 5/7/1837; the result was Philip Miles (Conservative) 3,839 votes, Francis FitzHardinge Berkeley, (Liberal) 3,212, William Fripp (Conservative) 3,156, see A.B.Beaven op. cit. p172.
48 *Bristol Mercury* 29/7/1837; Peter Brett op. cit., pp.299-300; for evidence relating to Bristol in the *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Bribery at Elections* (1835) see questions 6308-6464, 6544-6744, 6745-6920, 6921-7186; despite the *Mercury's* claim, the witness Harman Visger (hardly unbiased as a leading Liberal) does not support the claim of partisan distribution of the Peloquin fund, beyond acknowledging hearsay, see 6444-6446.

verifiable at this distance. [49] More significant was the fact that both parties now saw charity as symbolic of democratic virtue in a changed political landscape.

Why did charity remain an issue after 1837 ? After all, the national election had seen the return of bi-partisan representation in the two borough seats, and it was clear that the Tory majority on the Council was firmly ensconced. However the Liberal Charity Trustees soon discovered there was more ammunition on hand with which to attack their Tory rivals. The separation of charities from the Council necessitated a transfer of the funds, stock, accounts and property deeds to the Trustees. This the Council had been very loath to do. At first it refused to even acknowledge, let alone respond to, the Trustees' applications for the monies, while the new Board grew increasingly suspicious of the interminable delays. [50] This obstructionism was to some extent party political, but primarily economic. Reform of the Municipal Corporations had been borne along by the expectation that more representative councils would be better able to meet the demands of the mushrooming cities for improved policing, sanitation and so on. [51] Yet in Bristol the new Council was faced with a heavy burden from the public spending of its predecessor, occasioned by such items as the building of the New Gaol, and more recently the compensation owing to victims of the 1831 'Reform Riots'. [52] In this context it needed to maximise all available assets.

As the deeds were reluctantly yielded to the Trustees it became clear that the Liberals were being presented with another opportunity to make political capital from the endowed charities. Their secretary, Manchee, solicitor Brittain and accountant Joshua Jones subjected the records to a tougher scrutiny than the Charity Commissioners had managed. [53] Claims were advanced on behalf of four of the charities, Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Owen's lands (Grammar School) for misappropriation of income, and Bartholomew Lands (Grammar School) and Carr's Lands (Trinity Hospital) for illegal title to their property. The amount owing to the Trustees was and is a matter of debate, since

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49 Bribery from the charity funds need not have influenced the Liberals' defeat in 1835, which was self-inflicted; the two Liberal candidates together polled more than Philip Miles, the winner, suggesting that if they had complied with the usual two-party carve-up, rather than contesting both seats, they would have won one seat, see A.B.Beaven op. cit., p.172.

50 For example BMC MB vol I, Oct 1836-Feb 1842, 14th July 1837, 27th October 1837, and see Brittain to Council, BRO 00568 Folder 3 'Correspondence concerning transference and miscellaneous charity deeds and papers'.

51 Derek Fraser *Power and Authority in the Victorian City* (Oxford, 1979) pp.17-21.

52 Graham Bush op. cit., pp.74-9, 153-4.

53 A staunch Liberal, Thomas Manchee (publisher of the Bristol Charity Commission report and editor of the *Bristol Mercury*), had been elected Secretary to the Trustees, see BMC MB (Bristol Charity Trustees Minute Book) I 11/11/1836.

it hinges on the theoretical scale of interest calculated on the misappropriated capital sums or properties; Latimer suggests it 'certainly exceeded a quarter of a million pounds' while Bush repeats the Trustees' own estimate of £344,000. [54] The Conservatives sought to deflect the Trustees with a counter-attack. In November 1837 they launched an election petition claiming that two Liberal trustees, Cunningham and Harwood, had used charity funds to bribe electors. [55] The petition collapsed amidst claims of perjury, and the Council was left with no other tactic but to delay the inevitable. [56] With suits of £86,000 outstanding the Council finally agreed, in 1842, to pay compensation of £ 11,000 for its past misdeeds, and make good all income accrued on the charities since 1836.

Previous historians have downplayed the party political aspect of the charity dispute. Latimer, himself a nineteenth century Liberal, describes the episode in terms of a struggle between enlightened reform and corrupt self-interest. Bush views it as 'the last chapter in the practical transition from the old form of municipal government in Bristol to the new.' [57] Neither writer makes it clear that the Trustees were also the core group of Liberal activists in the Council, nor that the party was already exploiting their position for electioneering purposes when the dispute first arose. As one of the trustees, Harman Visger, admitted when the claim was debated: 'Neither did they for a moment contemplate any such arrears of interest being called for, as appeared to have accumulated; this monstrous amount only represented as in a mirror the injustice done by the counter-claim against the Charity.' [58] In other words, the money itself was not the issue since most trustees were also councillors, with nothing at all to gain from bankrupting the city treasury. The

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54 John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., p.235; Graham Bush op. cit., p.155-6.

55 Reprinted in full in *FFBJ* 25/11/1837, and see also 14/10/1837, for the assertion that the Trustees claim on the QEH fund had been deliberately timed to appear just before the municipal elections.

56 Extensive reports and verbatim transcripts of the hearings were carried in all the local press, in the last week in February, 1838, see eg. *FFBJ, Bristol Mercury* 24/2/1838; the Bristol Tories lost £12,000 in the ensuing court actions, see J.Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., pp.239-40; for the costs and pitfalls of petitioning in this period, Norman Gash *Politics in the Age of Peel* (London, 1952) pp.133-6.

57 Graham Bush op. cit., p.156; John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., pp.233-6. Having shown that the much of the malversation pre-dated the nineteenth century Latimer then seeks to heap the blame onto the Corporation members of the day: 'This brief summary of the proceedings of the Charity Trustees during the early years of their existence will suffice to show the true character of that system of charity administration which was described by Alderman Fripp in his evidence before the House of Lords as wholly irreproachable.'

58 Harman Visger BRO Common Council Proceedings 10/1837; the 'counter-claim' was the supposed debt to the old Corporation from the Hospital , which had featured in the Charity Commissioners report

real aim was to make political capital. Bristol's governing elite was divided and the charities were one of the battlegrounds on which it fought.

A final confirmation that it was the exigencies of electoral politics which forced charity administration into public discourse can be obtained by asking why it eventually disappeared from view. There were several elements which undermined its potency, and all point to its redundancy as an electoral tactic. First, Conservatives recognised that the ploy of besmirching the Liberal Trustees' reputation was not likely to succeed and could backfire on them. Secondly, charity became a more awkward issue for the Liberals in the 1840s when Whig Poor Law policy risked alienating Chartist sympathisers. Thirdly, Conservative infighting over free trade took the sting out of party conflict.

The 1841 election was the last in which the Tory press mounted a sustained campaign on the charities question, but the manner in which it was presented was seen as unproductive. Things started well enough, with hints at the impropriety of the links between prominent Trustees and the Liberal candidate's electoral committee. [59] Further capital was made out of the contradictions of dissenting Trustees having control of Anglican charities, a matter recently under consideration in the House of Lords. [60] However, as the campaign neared its close the Tory *Journal* made an injudiciously overt plea to voters: 'The freemen must remember that while Conservatives have Six Hundred and thirty-one gifts at their disposal, the number in the hands of the Charity Trustees amounts only to One Hundred and twenty-nine.' [61] This appeal was now a double-edged sword for Conservatism and the Liberal press was probably correct in asserting that the Tory hierarchy would have much preferred their more zealous campaigners and editors to abandon the issue. [62] In drawing attention to the Trustees' claims against the Council, they were reminding the public of the past malversation of the Tory-controlled Corporation; no one seriously challenged this now. The

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59 *FFBJ* 5/6/1841.

60 See *FFBJ* 24/4/1841 and the pamphlet 'A Few Words to the Electors of Bristol' in BRL *Collection of Broadsides, addresses, notices etc., relating to the Election of 1841*, no pagination; this was a bill which had been put up to tie a loose end of the Municipal Corporations Act, the wording of which had not been sufficiently tight to legally vest the charity estates in any body of Trustees which the Chancellor might appoint; the loophole meant for example that Trustees were not legally entitled to renew leases on charity property, but more significantly for Bristol, could also provide a stalling device in the ongoing legal action between Trustees and Corporation.

61 *FFBJ* 26/6/1841; the figures contrasted the parish endowments in the trust of the vestries with those held by the Trustees..

62 *Bristol Mercury* 13/3/1841, 26/6/1841; personal animosity may have fired the editor of the *Journal* who had suffered damaging losses following a libel action brought by the Charity Trustees in 1839, see John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., p.240.

Liberals could point out that they had been exonerated in the election petition of 1837, while that of 1835 had inculpated the Tories. To crown the Liberal argument, there was tangible evidence of improvement under the Trustees, for instance an increase in boys attending Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The Liberals had their own motives for dropping charity from their electoral platform. The issues which it symbolised - venal interest versus public spirit, corruption versus open administration - were rendered increasingly redundant by the realignment within party politics. Crucially, it risked opening up the thorny question of poor relief, which increasingly divided the Liberal leadership from Radical activists, at a time when working class politics in the city was diverging from the main party programmes. Poverty had been an issue of great moment in the 1830's, yet the political debate which surrounded the endowed charity question in Bristol did not engage with it. Instead, the problem was posed as one of management style: which group within the town's middle class could be best entrusted to administer the funds honestly? In their enthusiasm to advance charity malversation as a metaphor for 'Old Corruption' Bristol's Liberals failed to address the question of how their control of the endowments might improve the delivery of welfare in the town. Of course, the fruits of charity would no longer be the sole preserve of Tory voters, and there are glancing references to restoring property rights. [63] Yet the language of practical care or benevolent compassion for the needy was wholly absent.

This should come as no surprise, given the argument advanced here that the debate over endowed charity related to electoral advantage and had little to do with the question of need. Middle class Liberal and working-class Chartist could comfortably unite against graft within an effete, unaccountable elite, but the New Poor Law was more divisive. For example the speeches and literature of the 'Journeymen of the Trades' of Bristol in support of Berkeley in 1837 were a good deal further from the Whig ministry than their superiors in the local party. [64] True, the antipathy

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[63] For example *Bristol Mercury, FFBJ, Bristol Gazette*, 4/11/1837, for Liberal Trustee/Councillor George Thomas' address of thanks to the voters in Redcliff ward: 'The question appears to me to be one of property between different classes of my fellow-citizens; and it will be my anxious study to do impartial justice between conflicting interests'.

[64] For accounts of the working-class support for Berkeley see *Bristol Mercury* 15/7/1837, 22/7/1837 and *FFBJ* 29/7/1837; a rally held in the Tailor's Hall drew together cork cutters, cabinet-makers, sugar refiners, printers, shipwrights, brushmakers,

between 'the productive classes' and the 'palaced paupers' (ie. idle landowners), was central to the analysis. [65] However the political programme of the Liberal journeymen included repeal of the Corn Laws ('..the Tory machine for destroying by starvation a surplus poor population'), reform of the Poor Laws, secret ballot and extension of the suffrage. [66] A few months later the division between Chartists and Liberals became more explicit. At the first meeting of the new Working Men's Association the mood flowed strongly against the Liberals.

> 'Where were they when that infernal Whig poor law was passed ? (hear) Did they stand up and defend the rights of the working classes ? No, they left them in the lurch. In the reign of Elizabeth laws were enacted for the purpose of assisting the poor - these laws provided that, when a man was destitute or unable to work, he should be provided for; but the Whigs said "that was too much - it was too good - the working man must not be allowed to press so much upon the property of the rate payers". Why did they forget that the whole of that property was derived from the industry of the working men (hear)?' [67]

The gulf which opened within the Liberal constituency on this issue helps explain why charity was discussed within different parameters. Radicals claimed parish poor relief as a property right of the worker, given in compensation after the confiscation of monastic property, and as we have seen, a language of property rights was sometimes employed in discussing charity administration. [68] However this sat awkwardly with the arguments supporting the New Poor Law. As mouthpiece of the party leadership the *Bristol Mercury* defended government policy against Chartist attacks. Not only had '.. the idle and vicious paupers - the surplus population ... been driven to habits of sobriety and industry..' but in addition '..the insolence .. which used to distinguish the old poor law is

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braziers, ironmongers, coach-makers, bookbinders, toy-makers, carpenters, cordwainers, tailors, confectioners, sawyers, tin-plate workers, rope and twine spinners, tilers and plasterers, tanners, curriers, brightsmiths and wire workers..

65 *Bristol Mercury* 15/7/1837; see Gareth Stedman Jones 'Re-thinking Chartism' *Languages of Class: studies in English working-class history 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983).

66 *Bristol Mercury* 22/7/1837.

67 Report of meeting of Working Men's Association in Queen Square, *Bristol Mercury* 28/10/1837.

68 William Cobbett's *History of the Protestant Reformation in England and Ireland* (1824-27) edn. London 1896 was an influential text, see especially chs. v, vi, vii, xvi; Cobbett himself was hostile to subscription charity, though he regarded endowed foundations as the misappropriated property of the poor, see *Political Register* 9/11/1816, 30/11/1816, 10/10/1818; for the persistence of the the view of Poor Law as property right, Jose Harris *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1993), Penguin edn. 1994 pp.111-2.

exchanged for that respectful behaviour which is due from the relative station in which the labourer is placed.' [69] What did the *Mercury*'s working-class readership make of this ? Two weeks earlier the paper had urged them to vote out the Tories who 'take from the poor what is left them in alms' (see above), yet now it seemed that the 'Rads' regarded welfare not as a right but as a paternal arrangement which enforced subordination.

Discussion of endowed charity within the frame of reference of Whig thought on poverty therefore risked alienating a portion of the Liberal electorate. This is not to say that the Malthusian attack on indiscriminate out-relief could not be applied equally to charity, as Henry Brougham's later writing testifies. In 1834 the original campaigner for the Charity Commission argued that the only acceptable charities were those catering to 'the sick, the aged and the impotent', though even almshouses were suspect, since '...all prudent men of independent spirit, will, in the vigour of their days, lay by sufficient to maintain them...'. Educational endowments should no longer board poor children, as this promoted dependence, while money doles should be reserved '...rigorously for periods of extraordinary distress, and then bestowing them upon persons above the lowest classes...'. [70]

Such sentiments may have arisen from the logic of Whig social philosophy, but they were electorally dangerous, given the Chartist critique of the Poor Law, and the shifting political sociology it brought in its train. Bristol Chartists now proposed a three-tier model for society, '...the upper, or aristocratic, the middle, or trading, and the lower, or working classes: the first is chiefly composed of Tories, the second of Whigs, the last of Radicals.' [71] The Poor Law was portrayed as a conspiracy against the 'industrious mechanic and labourer, upon whom the two above-named classes fatten like drones in a hive..', and the true motive of the Malthusians was the cheap manipulation of the labour market. [72] Tories pitching to 'fellow labourers in the True Blue cause - the working

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69 *Bristol Mercury* 12/8/1837.

70 'Speech on moving the second reading of the Bill to Amend the Poor Laws, delivered in the House of Lords, July 21, 1834' *Lord Brougham's Speeches* op. cit., III pp.486-7; see also 'Letter to Sir Samuel Romilly upon the Abuse of Charities' (London, 1818) collected in ibid., pp.64-5.

71 *Bristol Mercury* 25/11/1837, from a long-running correspondence between the Chartist Moses Clements and two Whigs/Liberals writing under the pen-names 'Yorick' and 'Cosmopolite', in which the divergent standpoints on the Poor Law Amendment Act are fully articulated: *Bristol Mercury* 11/11/1837 to 23/12/1837 passim., - it was terminated at the end of the year, not because the powder of the disputants had run dry, but for fear that the readership might be tiring of the debate.

72 *Bristol Mercury* 9/12/1837.

classes' also seized upon the issue of 'the cursed Poor Law Bastilles which these Reformers have built for them ... for the 'enormous' crime of POVERTY'.[73] Pushed to articulate a party stance on charity and poor relief the Liberal position was at last clarified: 'Where cases of real hardship occur, the remedy must be applied by individual charity - a virtue for which no system of compulsory relief can or ought to be a substitute.'[74] The contradictions of Liberal administration of the charities were thus exposed. Was the aim to resurrect long-held rights of the poor through honest management ? Or was it to provide a salve for those caught between the attenuation of welfare benefits and the cyclical trade depressions, with the 'individual' or face-to-face nature of charity ensuring that relief went only to the genuinely deserving ? Thus as Chartism grew increasingly vociferous, and as Liberal voters divided on their opinions of poor relief the charity issue became less suitable as a rallying cause.

In the end though, it was the tension within the Tory camp which rendered the Liberal recourse to charity as a campaign theme unnecessary. William Fripp had been nominated by local Tories in 1841 to run with Miles against Berkeley in the hope of capturing both Bristol seats for the Conservatives. This scheme had not pleased Miles, who was conscious of the '..impropriety of his endeavouring to monopolize the franchise of a voter.'[75] The hapless Fripp was also attacked by the Tory MP for Somerset, James Adam Gordon whose priority was to promote the new Portbury Dock in Parliament, and who urged voters to back the Miles/Berkeley ticket as both had firmly supported his bill.[76] In 1847 William Fripp made his third and final unsuccessful bid for a seat, this time posing as the free trade candidate against Miles' protectionism. Election literature was dominated by questions of free trade, dock ownership and character assassination, to which the Miles camp brought considerably more aplomb and venom in their attack on Fripp than the Liberals had ever managed.[77] A glancing reference to charity appears in one such poster:

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73 *FFBJ* 3/3/1838 'Advertisement from W.Bulphin'.
74 *Bristol Mercury* 16/12/1837.
75 *FFBJ* 10/7/1841.
76 See various posters in BRL *Collection ... 1841* passim.; the Liberals narrowly defeated the second Tory at the poll: Miles 4,193, Berkeley 3,739, Fripp 3,684, A.B.Beaven op. cit., p.172.
77 This was just before the Council municipalised the Dock Company's assets, see David Large ed. *The Port of Britol* 1848-84 (Bristol, 1984) pp.vii-ix.

'..Who was the Leader of the old Charity Trust System ? William Fripp.

Who stated, ON OATH, before the House of Lords, that the Charity Trusts had been "honestly, piously and discreetly administered" ? William Fripp.

Who is the most Stingy, Mean and Tyrannical Man in Bristol ? William Fripp.

WE'LL NEVER HAVE HIM !' [78]

Thus the symbolic elasticity of charity administration had taken it on a long journey since it was used to portray the radical challenge to 'Old Corruption'. It ended its life in Bristol electoral politics as a weapon brandished in Conservative internecine warfare.

In 1851 this depoliticization of charity was made manifest in the constitution of the Board of Trustees. The deaths of several members prompted the Conservatives to petition the Lord Chancellor to establish a new (Tory) board. A Liberal counter-proposal followed, and the upshot was the appointment of a genuinely bi-partisan group. [79] This was not to be the last time that charity was prominent in the political debate of the town as the Taunton Commission (1864) and the subsequent Endowed Schools Act (1869) sought to radically reorganise the trusts. [80] Although the Conservative press milked the protests at this to castigate Gladstone's government the overwhelming impression given by the Charity Trustees' responses is that local opinion was united against what was seen as unwarranted interference from the centre. [81] The administration of endowed charitable trusts was no longer the potent issue in local party politics that it had been in the Reform era.

To summarise the argument thus far: the contention here is that the debate about the corrupt administration of endowed charity in Bristol was closely entwined with the concerns of electoral politics. It did not arise in response to public unease about the probity of trustees, and indeed made its first appearance at a time when endowment was enjoying renewed popularity. Nor did it properly engage the broader question of poor relief, and role of charity within a local strategy for social

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78 *Collection ... 1847* no pagination.

79 John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., p.236; Graham Bush op. cit., pp.148-9..

80 C.Hill op. cit., pp.96-103; F.W.E.Bowen op. cit., ch.15; Jean Vanes *Apparrelled in Red* (Gloucester, 1984) 88-96; the proposal of the visiting Commissioner, J.G. Fitch, was to merge the separate endowments into one fund, which would also include the Peloquin charity (a non-educational endowment), and from this to create new day schools and more accomodation for girls, with a reduced number of free places.

81 BMC NC scrapbooks of memorabilia, press cuttings, 1867-1870, 1870-73, 1873-81.

provision. Instead its rise and fall was linked firmly to the short term party considerations of its proponents, be they Radicals or Reform Whigs, for whom charity corruption aptly symbolised the graft and lack of accountability of the *ancien regime*, or Tory and Liberal party managers, both seeking to tarnish the reputation of the other by casting aspersions on their trusteeship. There was no unilinear relationship between corruption, decline, and reform of endowed trusts.

c) Liberals and Tories: a 'circulation of the elite' ?

The final section of the chapter will consolidate the argument through a more detailed comparison of the Liberal Charity Trustees and the Tories of the reformed Corporation. The point is to explore the nature of the division between the parties, then to ask whether the distinction was sufficient to permit a characterisation of the Liberals as reformers. It will be suggested that the evidence cannot successfully sustain this contention.

The historiography points in different directions. Traditionally the social implication of the Municipal Corporations Act has been viewed as a hand-over of power to the newly enfranchised middle classes: the replacement of old Tory 'co-optive oligarchies' by 'Dissenters and shop-keepers'. [82] Or, should the new men be seen not so much as representatives of a new class, but of a new ethic - embodying a more professional approach to local government, and the 'administrative purity and competence' which the Municipal Commissioners and Radical supporters claimed greater democracy would bring ? [83] Or, most pessimistically, should the whole episode be regarded merely as a 'circulation of the elite', where socio-economic divisions were irrelevant, and the key motivation was the desire of 'ambitious and frustrated outsiders' to oust 'traditional insiders' ? [84] To some social theorists the constant friction of elite and counter-elite in politics suggested that themes like democracy and accountability have no immanent meaning, but are '..means commonly used, especially today, to get rid of one aristocracy and replace it with another'. [85] Given the enthusiasm

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[82] G.M.Trevelyan *English Social History* (1942) Pelican edn. 1949 p.539; G.D.H.Cole and Raymond Postgate *The Common People 1746-1938* (London, 1938) p.267.

[83] Professionalism: Harold Perkin op. cit., p.123; commissioners: E.L.Woodward *The Age of Reform 1815-1870* (Oxford, 1938) p.442; Radicals: Derek Fraser *Urban Politics in Victorian England* (Leicester, 1976) pp.119-121.

[84] This position is taken by Derek Fraser, ibid., pp.115-118, quotes p.118, who sees the rift as one between 'traditional ruling families and newly-founded dynasties' and suggests that religious and political affiliation flowed from this distinction, ie. the former Tory/Anglican, the latter Whig/Dissenters.

[85] V.Pareto *Manual of political economy* (1927) edn. New York 1971 p. 93 cited in D.Taylor and F.Moghaddam *Theories of Inter-group Relations: International Social Psychological Perspectives* (New York, 1987) p.136, whose ch.7 gives a brief

with which all sides within Bristol's elite adopted the charities issue when it suited them, is the cynical position perhaps the most appropriate ? To arrive at an answer we will begin by characterising the new Charity Trustees, then compare them, in deed and in background with the Tory 'insiders'. First, *Table 4.1* shows party, religious affiliation, occupation and wealth at time of death, of the twenty-one Trustees.

Table 4.1: Bristol Municipal Charity Trustees, 1836-52

	Party	*Sect*	*Occupation*	*Wealth* *
Richard Ash	L	Independent	Attorney	£ 90,000
George Bengough	L	Unitarian	Attorney	£ 35,000
Samuel Brown	L	Anglican	Manufacturer	£ 35,000
Thomas Carlisle	L	Anglican	Wholesaler	£ 14,000
Michael Castle	L	Unitarian	Manufacturer	£ 35,000
James Cunningham	L	Anglican	Merchant	£ 5,000
Thomas Davies	L	?	Merchant	?
Robert Fiske	L	Anglican	Wholesaler	£ 6,000
Charles Bowles Fripp	L	Anglican	Manufacturer	£ 30,000
John Kerle Haberfield	T	Anglican	Attorney	£ 40,000
William Harwood	L	Baptist	Wholesaler	£ 3,000
William Herepath	L	Unitarian	Chemist	£ 600
Thomas Powell	L	Anglican	Wholesaler	£ 18,000
George Eddie Sanders	L	Anglican	Wholesaler	£ 25,000
John Savage	T	Anglican	Manufacturer	£ 9,000
Richard Smith	T	Anglican	Surgeon	£ 30,000
William Pyle Taunton	L	Anglican	Barrister	£ 2,000
George Thomas	L	Quaker	Wholesaler	£ 200,000
William Tothill	L	Quaker	Manufacturer	?
Harman Visger	L	Anglican	Consul	£ 70,000
James Wood	L	Methodist	Insurance	£ 6,000

* *Value of estate at death*

Source: Trade Directories 1814,1822, 1826, 1832, 1841; G.Bush op. cit., Appendix 5; BRO 00568 h).

This was in no sense a non-partisan body purely concerned with charity. The Liberal predominance has already been noted, and amongst the Trustees were the town's chief party activists. William Herapath had gained a reputation as a Radical through his presidency of Bristol's

account of the 'circulation of the elite' in political and social thought; Pareto's thesis is fully advanced in *The Mind and Society: a treatise on general sociology* 4 volumes (London, 1935) trans. Andrea Bongiorno and Arthur Livingstone.

pre-reform Political Union and subsequent role in the riots of 1831, where his intervention in the closing stages had helped to calm the situation. [86] Harman Visger had been a prominent campaigner against the old Corporation, and had caused something of a stir during the visit of the Municipal Corporations Commissioners, by approaching one of them outside the formal channel of the public hearing, with information on the docks' policy that was later included in the report. [87] Visger, along with Richard Ash, was responsible for the bribery petition which had followed the Tory victory in the 1835 election. Active involvement in national elections is also demonstrated by the role of trustees in nominating the Liberal candidates. Between 1831 and 1852 the following performed this role: Richard Ash, George Eddie Sanders, Michael Castle, James Cunningham, George Thomas and Harman Visger.

Anglicans out-numbered dissenters, rendering less convincing the Tory opposition argument that charities of the Established Church had now fallen into the hands of sectarians whose goal was to open up Church of England trusts to non-conformists. [88] However, if their numbers were not overwhelming, the Quakers in particular had a high public profile. [89] As will become more apparent in the discussion of voluntary charity, philanthropy in this period had a deeply sectarian tinge, so can a non-conformist agenda be discerned ? [90] The problem here lies in disentangling religious from political impulses, or simply from actions to promote fairness and efficiency. For example, the first advertisement for the Peloquin charities under the new regime introduced a procedure of petitioning through an application form carrying the names of 'two respectable persons', whom the Trustees could approach for a reference. When the applications were assessed all those supported by the churchwardens of St Thomas were rejected. [91] Was religion or politics at issue here ? The Peloquin gift was one of those which had been under scrutiny in the evidence

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86 Susan Thomas *The Bristol Riots* (Bristol, 1974) reproduces a handbill signed by Herapath urging the rioters to desist. He was later accused of having incited the event through inflammatory pro-reform speeches.

87 See *House of Lords Journal* 5th August 1835, p.407, and for Brougham's defence of the Commissioners taking Visger's evidence through unorthodox channels, speech in the House of Lords, 12th August 1835, in *Lord Brougham's Speeches* (Edinburgh, 1838) vol. III p.418.

88 See above note 60.

89 BRL *The Bristol Municipal Annual for 1838* (Bristol, 1838) by a 'no-party man', see sections on George Thomas and William Tothill.

90 See below ch.10.

91 BMC NC vol 1; BMC MB 12/12/1836, 26/12/1836; *Bristol Mercury* 29/7/1837; applications from St Mary-le-Port were accepted, and the report made that St Stephen's churchwardens had refused to sign any petitions.

before the Parliamentary Bribery Committee following the 1835 election, and the Liberals were convinced that the majority of the gifts had found their way to Tory voters. [92] Perhaps St Thomas was having its wrist slapped for previously favouring the 'blues', or perhaps the vestry had simply failed to carry out their instructions correctly.

Membership was drawn equally from the professions and commerce, slightly less from manufacturing, while wealth varied fairly dramatically. However, it is only when the Trustees are compared to another elite power grouping - the Tories on the reformed Council - that their distinguishing features become apparent. In occupational terms the Tory group had slightly less representation amongst professionals (predominantly the law), a much greater number of merchants engaged in foreign trade, and an absence of those working in internal commerce; there was also a higher proportion of manufacturers (glass, tobacco, metals, paint). The two gentlemen with private incomes also had links to eighteenth century sources of wealth: Robert Case, a West Indian proprieter, and Gabriel Goldney, member of a family with interests in banking and iron. Although there was only one actual banker, James Lean, within the Tory ranks, Thomas Daniel and James George, as well as Goldney had either direct or family connections with Bristol's banking network, again in contrast to the Liberals. [93] The overall trend is confirmed with the figures for membership of the guild of Merchant Venturers, here exclusive to the Tories, and representative of the cross-section of foreign trade and manufacturing which typefies the group. [94] The Tory elite were also entirely Anglican.

This is in line with Fraser's analysis of a national political divide between an upper middle-class of mostly Tory merchants and manufacturers who owed their position to the town's commercial past, and a Liberal bourgeoisie drawn from the newer service sector. [95] Broadly, a comparison of the wealth of the two groups confirms this speculation, though *Table 4.2 b)* is only an impressionistic

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92 *Select Committee on Bribery at Elections* op. cit., questions 6444-6446.

93 C.Cave *A History of Banking in Bristol* (Bristol, 1899) passim.; the Liberal links were more tenuous: George Bengough's uncle Henry had been a partner in Bristol City Bank, but George, though a Trustee, did not sit on the reformed Council; the Fripp family also had banking interests though in the case of this family party loyalties were divided.

94 P. McGrath *The Merchant Venturers of Bristol* (Bristol, 1975); in 1833 the Venturers were criticised in the local press for their 'closed', 'hereditary' structure, regarded as prejudicial to the public interest through the monopoly they held over craneage and wharfage tolls, see J.B.Kington op. cit., first section pp.129-135, and for the relevant extract from the Municipal Commission Report, pp.20-21; see also BW.E.Alford op. cit., pp.265-6.

95 See above note 84.

view of wealth since the size of estate at death cannot be taken as a sure indicator of riches in life. [96] The most significant factor in determining average wealth is the greater number of Tory 'super-rich', ie. with estates valued at over £100,000, yet the overall imbalance is quite distinct, with 81 % of the Liberal Trustees leaving less than £40,000, against 57 % of Tories.

Table 4.2a): Comparison of Liberal Trustees with Corporation Tories 1835-6, occupation, religion.

	Liberal Charity Trustees		Tories	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Occupations:				
Professions	6	33	4	16
Commerce:				
a) Merchants	2	11	9	36
b) Wholesalers	6	33	-	-
Manufacturers	4	23	10	40
Private Income	-	-	2	8
Religion:				
Anglican:	9	53	25	100
Non-Conformist	8	47	-	-
Merchant Venturers:	-	-	11	44

Source: as for *Table 4.1*; A.Beaven *Bristol Lists*; P. McGrath *The Merchant Venturers of Bristol*

Table 4.2b): Comparison of Liberal Trustees with Corporation Tories 1835-6, wealth (estate at death).

	Liberal Charity Trustees		Tories	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Wealth:				
> £ 9,999	6	37	6	26
£ 10,000 - £ 39,999	7	44	7	31
£ 40,000 - £ 69,999	-	-	4	17
£ 70,000 - £ 99,999	2	13	1	4
<£ 100,000	1	6	5	22
Average size of estate:	£ 35,725		£ 64,143	

Source: Graham Bush *Bristol and its Municipal Government*, Appendix.

[96] The ongoing debate over Rubinstein's methodology raises the relevant issues: see for example S.Gunn 'The 'failure' of the Victorian middle class: a critique' in J.Wolff and J.Seed *The Culture of Capital* (Manchester, 1988) pp. 20-21.

Having established a general economic distinction between the Liberal Trustees and the Tory councillors, we should be wary of reading off a distinct ideological cleavage, which might in turn have informed a different approach to charity administration. The record of how economic relations operated within or across the groups is too fragmentary: we know for example that Liberals Visger, Fripp, and Powell once formed a partnership for a property deal, but this is insufficient proof of a more general sense of economic identification. [97] What are we to make of the fact that the leading party protagonists on the opposing sides, Daniel for the Tories and Cunningham for the Liberals, were both West Indian planters who received compensation for loss of slaves on abolition ? At what point did political difference supersede economic similarity ? [98] In some key issues the blurring of party boundaries can be observed. Dock politics for instance had always been a bi-partisan affair, despite the fact that it was the Liberals, notably Visger, who had made capital from the old Corporation's inertia before the Municipal Corporations Commission. However, Tories had also been active adversaries, from the efforts of Bush and Gutch in attacking port dues in the 1820's, and inspiring the foundation of the Chamber of Commerce, in which various leading Tories were '..even more zealous in their attack than were their Whig colleagues.' [99] Later, on the national question of free trade, the Frippite Tories of 1847 supported the lowering of duties. Nor was the municipalization of the docks in 1846 a party issue - the Free Port Association was bi-partisan. Council protagonists for a buy-out of the Dock Company included the Liberal Harman Visger and the Tory Richard Poole King, while objectors were drawn from both Tory territory (Cliftonites fearing that their rates would subsidise the cost of the purchase of the shares) and Liberal (Herapath's proposal that a new Council dock committee should be chosen by ratepayers). [100]

John Brewer has proposed that the rise in the eighteenth century of a commercial bourgeoisie independent of the aristocratic 'client economy', generated a new political ethic which emphasized

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97 BRO 4965 (34(g)) Conveyance of two tenements; J.B.Kington the critic of the old Corporation was also a partner.
98 C.Cave op. cit., suggests Daniel received £ 55,177 from the slave compensation fund, while Cunningham's payment is cited in the *FFBJ* 24/3/1838.
99 J.Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., p.104.
100 *Bristol Mirror* 12/ 1849; Graham Bush op. cit., pp. 22-4, 89-91.

integrity and honesty. [101] Was this the defining charactersistic of the Liberals ? Certainly there was a conscious aspiration to high standards of administrative probity evident in the records of the Trustees, particularly in the early days of the organisation, when the standards were first laid down. A hefty security of £ 4,000 was to be demanded of the group's secretary, who had responsibility for handling the monies; no employee of the Trustees was to receive gratuities from charity applicants or from trade suppliers on pain of dismissal; all contracts for building repairs and food supplies were put out to tender and the cheapest estimate accepted; annual accounts were published. [102] The Corporation had hitherto enjoyed an annual feast on the Red Maids School's 'founder's day', funded by the Whitson charity, but when consultation of Whitson's will revealed no provision for a dinner, the proposal had been rescinded. [103] A proliferation of committees, on the different schools, the loan monies, insurance, accounts, individual gifts, and temporary issues such as '..to Define duties for a Committee of Management' illustrate a pervasive ideal of efficiency through rationalised division of labour. [104] Two of the Trustees could claim to be experts on relevant issues: Fripp presented papers to the local Statistical Society on poverty in Bristol, and William Pyle Taunton had published a booklet on the Westbury-on-Trym charities. [105]

However, it is by no means clear that the new ethic of accountability and social citizenship can be ascribed to specifically party ideology. Division of labour by committee and an automatic acceptance of the cheapest tender was a feature of some select vestries in the early nineteenth century. [106] The new Council's Treasurer, Thomas Garrard, had also to provide £ 4,000 sureties. Perhaps the greatest act of self-sacrifice in rejecting a perquisite of the old system was that of a Tory, John Kerle Haberfield, who in 1837 assumed the mayoralty, refusing the allowance of £ 400. [107]

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101 J.Brewer 'Commercialization and Politics' in N.McKendrick, J.Brewer, J.Plumb *The Birth of a Consumer Society: the Commercialization of Eighteenth Century England* (London, 1982); W.Rubinstein 'Wealth elites and Class Structure in Britain', *Past and Present* 76, (1977) pp.99-126; see also John Torrance 'Social Class and Bureaucratic Innovation: the Commissioners for Examining the Public Accounts 1780-1781' *Past and Present* 78, (1978) pp.56-81.

102 BMC MB vol. 1: 2/11/1836, 11/11/1836, 9/12/1836, 14/12/1836, 31/12/1836, 11/8/1837; public accounts, see for example *Bristol Mercury* 29/5/1841.

103 BMC MB vol. 1: 18/11/1836, 21/11/1836; henceforth the annual reference to the celebrations scrupulously note that the diners paid for their own dinners.

104 Ibid., 8/9/1837.

105 Fripp: see proceedings of the 2nd AGM of the Bristol Statistical Society 1839, BRO *Bristol Pamphlets* vol IV; Taunton: *Account of Anthony Edmond's Charity* (Bristol, 1834)

106 See below, Chapter 5.

107 BRO *Proceedings of Common Council* 20/12/1843; BRO 06527 *Memorial Scrapbook of James Kerle Haberfield*, p.10.

Looking back on the reform era from the mid-Victorian period, commentators were more inclined to characterise it as a non-partisan reformation of manners, in which civic affairs became more moderate, serious and respectable. [108]

Nor were the Trustees themselves willing to sever all links with customary practice, especially where there was a benefit to be derived. This is most clear in their continuing with the use of charity schoolchildren in urban display. In 1837, they provocatively ordered the boys of Queen Elizabeth Hospital in the trades procession celebrating the election victory of the Liberal candidate Francis Fitzhardinge Berkeley. 'The boys of the City School were posted over the portico of the Mayor's Chapel, and appeared highly gratified at the spectacle', reported the Liberal press. [109] Probably the Mayor's Chapel, flanking College Green, was favoured not out of consideration for the childrens' view of the event, but because the children themselves were on view, adorning a symbol of civic power. It is hard to disagree with the *Journal*'s verdict: 'The object ... was to shew off the poor children as being under the patronage of the Liberal Trustees ... who have used the charities as an electioneering engine, and are resolved to keep up the game.' [110]

The parade of charity school-children was an enduring practice, which in its own way encapsulates the relationship between charity and civic power that has been the theme of this chapter. [111] Both before and after the establishment of the new Trustee body the charity schools were expected to support the status quo of power in the town, whether through attendance at functions marking corporate loyalty to the crown, or in pageant with a purely civic meaning. [112] Association of these scholars with the ruling elite, of whatever party stripe, provided authentication of the authority structure, reminding spectators that the gift relationship uniting the children with

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108 *Bristol Times* 2/1/1858; *Bristol Times and Mirror* 2/4/1888; Graham Bush op. cit., pp. 212-3.

109 *Bristol Mercury* 29/7/1837.

110 *FFBJ* 29/7/1837.

111 See also Craig Rose 'London's Charity Schools, 1690-1730', *History Today* 40, (March 1990) pp.17-23, idem., '"Seminaries of Faction and Rebellion" Jacobites, Whigs and the London Charity Schools, 1716-1724' *The Historical Journal* 34, 4, (1991) pp.831-855. Rose suggests that once the Whig-Anglican ascendancy was firmly established, by the 1720's, the political implications of control of the charity schools gave way, with the Hospitals the new battleground and 'cynosure of London philanthropy'; he suggests the persistence of public ceremonial was 'to maintain momentum and financial stability once party strife had faded'. See also Phillis Cunnington and Catherine Lucas *Charity Costumes of children, scholars, almsfolk, pensioners* (London, 1978) ch.15, though here the interpretation is limited to the decorative and ornamental aspects of the parades.

112 For examples, see F.W.E..Bowen *Queen Elizabeth's Hospital,Bristol* (Clevedon, 1971) pp. 30, 61, 73-4, 95-6; for the involvement of the Red Maids, see also J.Vanes *Apparrelled in Red* (Gloucester, 1984) p. 79, 87, 104.

the civic leadership was resonant of the essential oneness of rulers and ruled, the historic bonds of dependence and obligation joining all Bristolians, rich or poor. To take just two examples, in 1846, Free School children processed at the celebrations which marked the beginning of the restoration of St Mary Redcliffe church, while in 1864 boys from Queen Elizabeth's Hospital and Colston's School lined the footpaths for the opening of the Suspension Bridge. [113] In this respect the actions of the Liberals trustees were no different from those of the elite they supplanted, and it seems that here is more justification for seeing the politics of charity in the light of a struggle for power, as well as a desire to reform.

Finally, is the comparative efficacy of the new Trustees quantifiable ? After all, as shown in Chapter 3, substantial increases in annual income *were* achieved between the time of the Brougham Commission's report and the Commission of 1867-76: £19,874, rising to £48,356, of which £18,587 was 'Improved Increase of Reported Endowments'. [114] Out of the total increase of £28,482, income from real estate (rents and rent charges) had increased by £18,757, and that from personalty by £9,730. [115] Most of the added income from new or previously unrecorded charities was in the form of profits from personalty - only £1,410 out of £9,895 was from real estate. Hence 35% of the total increase was produced by the new/unrecorded charities, 4% by increase in the securities income of the old charities, and 61% by gains in the real estate income of the old charities. Just over half of this was attributable to five of the charities now supervised by the Trustees.[116]

This demonstrates the tangible benefits of reform, as a large part of the increases were due to the recovery of lands alienated at various times from the charities. [117] It is most unlikely that this would have happened without the handover to the Trustees, since, unlike the property that funded Colston's

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113 *Bristol Mirror* 25/4/1846: the order of the procession was as follows: 'Police, Pile St. Free School Boys, Redcliffe Free School Girls, Working Masons with Banners, Clerk of Works, Architects, Vestry, Subscribers, Churchwardens, Clergy, Mayor and Corporation, Freemasons, Police'; F.W.E..Bowen op. cit., p.96.

114 PP 1877 lxvi p.34, 'General Digest of Endowed Charities in England and Wales' Table III; the remainder of the increase consisted of: £ 6,254 from extant charities not included in the first report, such as the Infirmary and the Strangers' Friend Society, ommitted because their income at that time was thought to be principally from subscription; £ 3,641 from charities founded since the first report.

115 Ibid., p.27, Table I; PP 1845 xvii 'Summary of the Reports made by the Commissioners of Inquiry into Charities', pp.830-1; there is a discrepancy of £5 between the increase recorded in the 'General Digest' Table III, op. cit., and that calculated by deducting the property and personalty totals recorded in the 'Summary of Reports' Table I from those in the 'General Digest Table I.

116 The increases were, QEH, £2,371 - £7,192, Grammar School, £41 - £464, Whitson, £1,383 - £3,945, Trinity, £534 - £1,734, Foster £289 - £1,134.

117 John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* pp.233-235.

school, the Brougham Commissioners had not detected contested claims to the land. [118] However the achievement of the Trustees needs to be qualified in two ways. Firstly, the period in question was one in which rental income from land rose dramatically. Historians have offered several examples of growth. Between about 1790 and 1820 rents on cultivated landed estates rose by an average of 90%; a small sample of great estates in Yorkshire reveals rentals trebling between 1780 and 1830, then doubling between 1830 and 1880; a late nineteenth century estimate of average rent of cultivated land per acre in 1770 was 13s, rising to 27s by 1850, and 30s by 1878. [119] The successful development of urban property could also yield a 'golden harvest'. [120] No ideal index exists with which to adjust the increased Bristol charity revenue, but clearly the context of rising real estate receipts modifies the Trustees' gains, and, as will be shown, the old elite was just as capable of increasing rental income as its successors. [121]

The thrust of this chapter has been to demonstrate that the momentum for charity reform was its potency as a party political issue. We have already seen that the claims advanced against the Corporation related largely to malversation which had occurred in the distant past, and that it was never seriously intended that the full sums should have been paid. We can only speculate as to whether the improvements would have been undertaken for their own sake. What is more certain is that they were prompted not by the external efforts of the Charity Commissioners, nor by an internal movement of social renewal, but by the cut and thrust of local and national electioneering.

A comparison between the Liberal Trustees and their Tory rivals points most strongly to a distinction between an 'in' and an 'out' group within the urban elite. There were certainly some differences in religious and socio-economic background, but it is not clear that these added up to an ideological divide which might have motivated the reform of the charitable trusts. Instead the

118 P.McGrath op. cit., pp.365-70.

119 F.M.L.Thompson *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1963) pp.218-20; Barbara English *The Great Landowners of East Yorkshire, 1530-1910* (London, 1990) pp.104-6; George C.Brodrick *English Land and English Landlords* (London, 1881) p.85.

120 David Cannadine *Lords and Landlords: The Aristocracy and the Towns 1774-1967* (Leicester, 1980) ch. 7 for the Calthorpe's profits from Edgbaston, quote p.129.

121 See below Chapter 5 b).

evidence conforms to the picture drawn above, which related the politicization of charity to electoral advantage.

Conclusion

John Vincent has argued that the great national questions were of secondary importance in Victorian parliamentary elections, which should be regarded as '..more a drama enacted about the life of the town, the precedence, 'pecking order', and social sanctions which held it together, than a means of expressing individual opinions about the matters of the day..'. [122] Here it is suggested that the question of charity corruption, as it arose in the elections of 1812, 1835, 1837 and 1841 was part of just such a process. The aim of this chapter has been to show that the waxing and waning of endowed charity as an issue in the theatre of urban politics was more its significance to the 'pecking order' than its immanent importance as one of the 'matters of the day'. What then, are the implications for the broader question of the decline of endowment ?

If the chronology of the 'politics of charity' set out here is contrasted with the long-term view of numbers and values of new endowments (*Figures 3.1* and *3.2* in the previous chapter), then it seems that if 'reform' had any effect at all on the habit of establishing charitable trusts, it was a negative one. The early nineteenth century was the period in which the practice enjoyed a revival, both in terms of numbers of trusts set up, and of the sums donated. However, this was also the point at which Hunt's critique introduced the problem of administration to public debate. Following this, the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s were the decades in which new endowments reached an all time low. Far from reassuring potential donors and attracting them back towards a discredited form of giving, the most plausible inference must be that the publicity surrounding the reform of the municipal charities made philanthropists all the more wary. Confidence did not return until the latter part of the century when the issue had faded in importance, and even then it was the more recent voluntary institutions which attracted endowment.

So, an important component of the decline of endowed charity was, paradoxically, the public debate over its improvement and the grubby politicking which this entailed. To complete the picture

122 John Vincent *The Formation of the Liberal Party* (London, 1966) p.xv.

of change we must turn from the high profile, wealthy municipal charities, to the more numerous but much smaller parish charities, where some additional pressures can be detected.

Chapter 5

Charity and the Parish: an end to 'Old Corruption' ?

The analysis of the Charity Commission's findings given in Chapter 3 showed that the decline of endowed charity was marked particularly by a fall in the number of new trusts in the gift of the parish. In this chapter parochial charities will be examined in depth, to establish why potential testators increasingly rejected the option of leaving money for vestry distribution through the parish channels. Some of the themes of the previous chapter will be revisited, asking for example, whether there is evidence that parish charity and housing policy favoured party loyalty.

The problem of explaining the retreat from parochial charity breaks into three sections. Firstly the role of the parish in local government is examined. Was the undemocratic nature of the vestries their undoing, with the related possibilites of abuse of power for personal or political advantage ? Secondly the administration of the charities is considered. Might the fear that unpaid, volunteer officials were incompetent to manage complex trusts have been the determinant ? Thirdly, the parish will be set in the changing landscape of local government during the reform era. To what extent was it coming to be seen as a functional anachronism ?

a) The parish in the city

The urban landscape paintings of Bristol in the nineteenth century, particularly those by two doyens of the 'Bristol School', William Muller and Samuel Jackson, show a city of churches. Muller's 'Bristol from Clifton Wood' (*Figure 5.1*) epitomizes the contemporary view: in the foreground pastoral scenes cup the city in a bucolic hand, and somewhere between the habitations and the heavens are the clustered spires, with the Cathedral, its perspective distorted to exaggerate its size, at the centre of the work. [1] Distance has softened the noise, the smoke and the industry, and, looming metaphorically and physically above the ships' masts and the chimneys of the glass-houses, are the churches. The image is one of homogeneous community, consisting of the parishes, individual 'gemeinschaften', which revolve around the symbol of cohesion, the Anglican cathedral.

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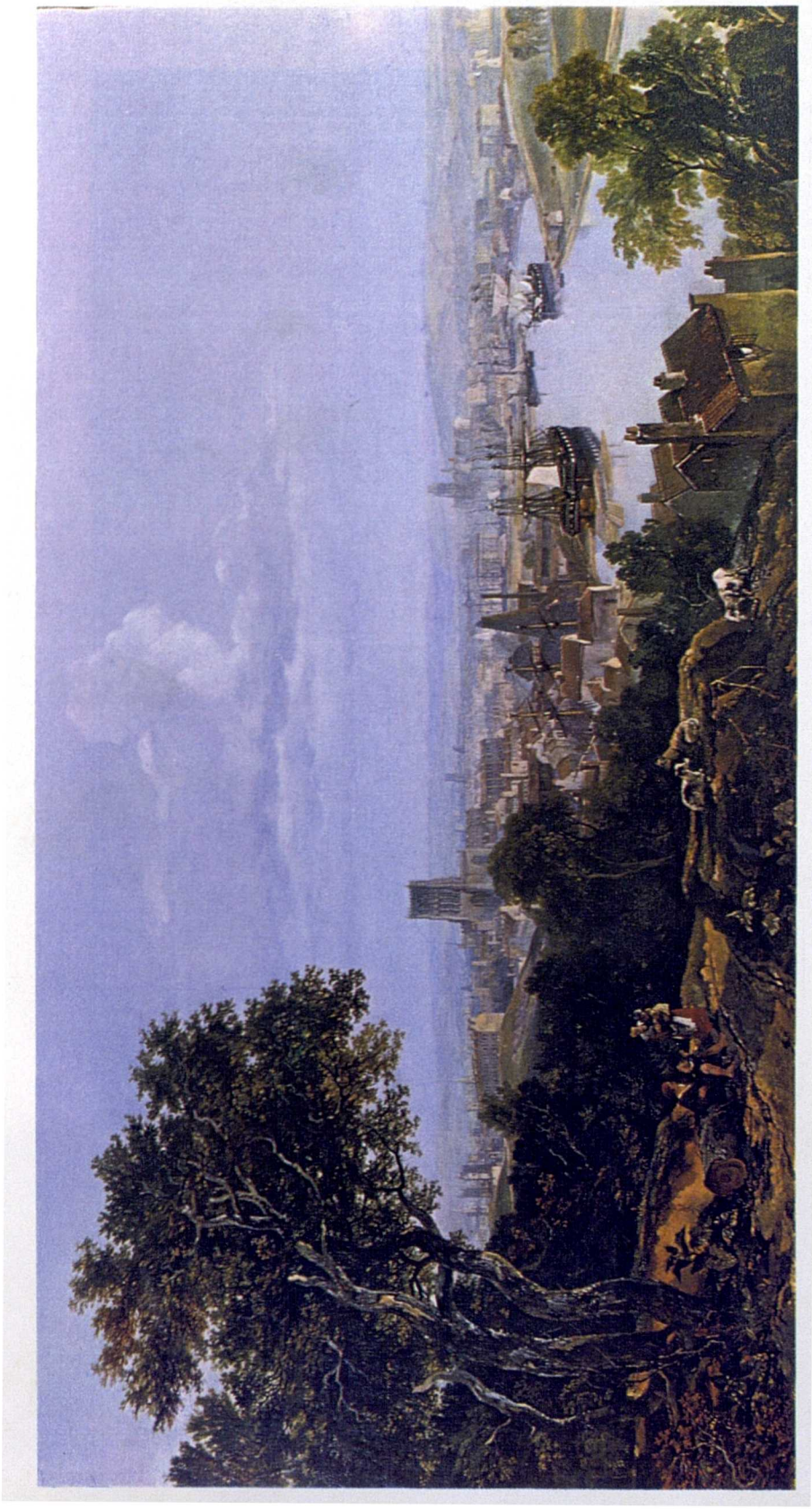
1 W.Muller 'Bristol from Clifton Wood', in Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, reproduced in F.Greenacre and S.Stoddard *W.J.Muller* (Bristol 1991) see pp.19, 100; works by Samuel Jackson's such as 'Ferry slip at Temple Back' (1823) and 'Bristol Bridge and St Nicholas Church' (1824) address the same theme more intimately.

Fig. 5.1 *Bristol from Clifton Wood* W.J.Muller (1837) Courtesy of Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery



Aesthetics reflected a partial reality; parishes were still a locus of the political community, through their secular government, the select vestries. [2] And as we have seen, the greatest number of charitable trusts was in the administrative purlieu of these bodies, usually through endowment to the churchwardens. Can an understanding of the nature of the select vestry system in the early nineteenth century help explain the decline of parochial charity ?

Firstly, how were Bristol's select vestries constituted, and what were their functions ? Essentially they were self-perpetuating cliques of the leading citizens of a parish, united by loyalty to church and crown. This 'closed' system of local government was by no means typical of the country as a whole, though it was also found in Westminster and the City of London, as well as throughout Northumberland and Durham. [3] The usual procedure was for a nominee to be co-opted initially to the post of churchwarden, which carried the brunt of the administrative and financial responsibility, particularly in the second year, when the new member rose to senior churchwarden. [4] The full group consisted of the minister, the churchwardens, the overseers, the way-wardens (Surveyors of the Highway) and the vestrymen. [5] In the early nineteenth century new city-wide bodies such as Pitching and Paving commissioners and Poor Law Union were usurping much of the influence wielded by vestries elsewhere; nonetheless, there remained various management duties which both conferred and reflected status and power. These could be parochial and customary, as in the case of the perambulation of the parish, with staves and rods to check the boundaries; this might entail the distribution of cakes and ale 'for the boys' as well as a ceremonial dinner for the vestry and

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2 The classic discussion of select vestries (in the sense of a 'close' vestry, rather than a vestry constituted under the terms of the Sturges Bourne Select Vestry Act of 1819) is in Sidney and Beatrice Webb *The Parish and the County* (London, 1906), edn. 1963: pp.173-276; for an earlier survey of Bristol parishes, see Jonathan Barry 'The parish in civic life: Bristol and its churches 1640-1750', S.J.Wright ed. *Parish, Church and People* (London, 1988).

3 Sidney and Beatrice Webb *The Parish and the County* op. cit., pp.174, 182-3, 189, suggest that though the legal justification of the Bristol select vestries was 'Immemorial Custom': they appear to have developed out of open vestries during the sixteenth century, as a 'close body' evolved from the legal necessity of appointing feoffees of parish lands, hence establishing a select group with responsibilities that the open meeting could not fulfill. This would make sense for Bristol, in the light of the large amount of property and charitable trusts in the parishes' charge, though it still begs the question of why other similar cities followed a different pattern.

4 For instance, BRO P/St.J/V/6: 3/9/1802 & 17/2/1809 for the selection and resignation of J.Fripp; P/St.P/V/1a: 3/5/1813 for the selection of W.Bushell.

5 Women did not figure in the organisation, and though it was not uncommon for sextonesses to be chosen (see P/Tm/La 3: 20/4/1813 for the election of Elizabeth Sparks as sextoness of Temple), this job did not carry a place on the vestry. The incumbent was not expected to meddle in the 'temporal affairs' of the vestry, see P/Tm/La 3: 4/2/1817.

'gentlemen of the parish'. [6] It might equally be a national responsibility devolved to the vestry as the smallest arm of government, for example, from 1801 to 1831 it was the duty of overseers to compile the census returns, a task which usually involved the whole vestry in planning. [7] In addition to supervising the fabric of the church building, the chief functions were the levying of the poor rate, and the administration of the 'church lands' and charitable trusts.

To what extent might the unrepresentative nature of the select vestry have deterred potential donors ? If this question is approached through a prosopography of vestry members the answer is equivocal. *Table 5.1* breaks down the occupations and residency of members of St. James and St Augustine vestries, 1800- 35. Like any parish, St.James vestry was bound to reflect a particular socio-economic constituency, so should not be taken as representative, but, as the largest of the parishes of the old city (population 10,488 in 1831), and one which included smart residential squares and labourers' tenements, it can stand as a useful example. By contrast, St Augustine had the cathedral, much of the dockside, and the fashionable Park Street within its bounds.

Table 5.1: Occupational / residential structure of St. James / St Augustine vestries, 1800-1835

	St James	St Augustine
Merchants	3	19
Gentlemen	9	5
Professions	3	5
Services (retailing, building, others)	14	6
Manufacturing	4	4
Resident in parish	31	36
Elsewhere	2	10

Source: St.James and St Augustine Vestry Minute Books; *Bristol Poll Books*, 1812, 1820, 1830; *Matthews's Bristol Directory* 1830

6 For example P/St P/V/1(a):15/5/1811; N.Rogers *Whigs and Cities. Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt* (Oxford, 1989), pp.353-4 notes the persistence of this custom in eighteenth century London, and describes it in terms of a ceremonial enforcement of social unity.

7 P/St T/V: 2/5/1831.

With regard to St James T*able 5.1* cannot reveal whether the vestry was a power-base for the wealthy.[8] It does suggest that the stereotype of a trades-dominated 'jobbing' vestry caricatured by the Webbs is inappropriate, as is that of conscientious administration presided over by a disinterested elite. [9] There undoubtedly a degree of 'jobbery': in 1802 for example, vestryman Joseph Panting was employed for the joinery work on the church, the vestry-room and the porch, while in 1817 Thomas Cole was contracted to erect the booths and buildings of the St James Fair. [10] St Augustine, with its preponderance of merchants and gentlemen, is even less likely to have experienced trades jobbery, though the high number of non-residents, and the influence over the docks perhaps suggests that the vested interests of Bristol's merchantocracy saw control of this parish as important. At this distance though, the fine line between dishonest self-interest and customary norms is hard to distinguish. Take for instance the resignation from St James vestry in 1817 of William Reed, a vestryman claiming to be motivated by '..the care of the church, the interest of the parish and the comforts of the poor.' Such was the devotion and longevity of his service that the vestry voted to present him with an inscribed plate worth 50 guineas. [11] Should this be read as an unwarranted use of public funds, symptomatic of the venal ethos of pre-reform politics, or does it simply indicate a different ethos ? After all, vestrymen were unpaid, yet their responsibility was considerable: St James' annual income and expenditure was well over £ 1,000; if a rate collector defalcated the blame fell on the parish. [12] We need not assume then that there was no toleration of perquisites for a job which shouldered the burdens of the community.

Could it be argued that popular disenchantment with the vestry rose instead from a perception of administrative failings ? Here again, we should not assume that a 'pre-modern' lack of democratic control necessarily impeded bureaucratic efficiency and rationalisation in the early decades of the

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8 Not all the vestrymen were traceable in the sources: the St James table is based on 33 out of a total sample of 40, St Augustine on 45 out of 52. No correlation between occupation and wealth should be assumed: for instance, John Bangley, listed as a cooper, was rich enough to leave £ 1,200 to charity in his will.

9 Sidney and Beatrice Webb *The Parish and the County* op. cit., pp.244-5.

10 P/St J/ChW 36; P/StJ/V/6: 13/8/1817.

11 P/StJ/V/6: 18/2/1817.

12 See P/St J/V/6: 20/1/1814, where churchwarden John Wait records disbursing £ 1,337-0s-11d over his year of office; also P/St J/V/6: 1816-17 passim. for problems attending the defalcation of 1813-14 rate-collector Maybury, resolved by indemnifying the then churchwardens for any liability from the parish funds, 9/2/1818.

century. [13] Paid specialists were used, with the employment of vestry-clerks to ensure effective record- keeping, and bailiffs to manage church property; the use of job descriptions to clarify the role of these new paid officials also occurs. [14] Another example is delegation of responsibility to sub-groups, such as St James' Committee of Renewals, which oversaw property inspections, renewals of lives and fund investments. By the 1820s it was recording tenders for church repairs and accepting the cheapest bid. [15] Indeed, some vestry minutes of the period, St Mary Redcliffe for instance, are increasingly the dry, business-like deliberations of a housing committee. Greater openness was not the pre-requisite of modernization.

A more serious charge against the early nineteenth century Bristol vestries was levelled by the Webbs, who called them: '...notorious for their active political partisanship ... in fact, Tory electioneering clubs, in shameless electoral alliance with the Corporation'. [16] The question of vestry politics in this period of often bitter division is clearly central to understanding public perceptions of local government, and can be approached in various ways.

Table 5.2 (over) tests the Webbs' assertion through investigating the political affiliation of St James and St Augustine vestrymen, based on votes cast in 1812, 1820 and 1830. [17] It suggests that there was a grain of truth in the charge of partisanship, but that the nature of the borough seat ensured that the vestry vote was not exclusively Tory. The preferred ticket was the Whig/Tory split, the two-party carve-up so reviled by Hunt, which represented stability and the assertion of the status quo. Comparison with the overall spread of votes within the town locates the vestry firmly to the right of centre, with Radicalism rejected in 1812 and 1830, and Romilly's more progressive platform in 1812 finding little favour. The one discrepancy between the two vestries is over the Whig

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13 I have in mind the case put by W.D.Rubinstein in 'The End of "Old Corruption" in Britain, 1780-1860', *Past and Present* (1983) 101, (1983) pp.55-86; drawing on Weber's theory of organisational change, Rubinstein broadened the meaning of 'Old Corruption' from straightforward graft in high office to a catch-all description of pre-modern, non-rational bureaucracy, which he regarded as the victim of the Whig reforms.

14 Vestry clerk Mr Bird was succeeded in 1816 by William Ody Hare at a salary of 5 guineas p.a.: P/StJ/V: 13/3/1816; job descriptions: St Mary Redcliffe vestry minutes, 1822-45: 29/10/1824, 5/9/1828.

15 Committee for Renewals: P/StJ/V: 1816-17 passim.; for tenders ibid.:8/8/1828.

16 Sidney and Beatrice Webb *The Parish and the County* op. cit., p.242, footnote.

17 As with *Table 5.1* not all the vestrymen were traceable in the poll- books. In this case 29 out of the 40 appeared; either the others did not have the franchise, or did not vote in the three elections for which the poll-books are extant

candidates in 1830. Baillie was the pro-slavery Whig, and as such may have had an understandably greater appeal to the merchants of St Augustine.

Table 5.2: Party affiliation of St James / St Augustine vestry, 1800-1835

a) Votes cast 1812, 1820, 1830

	St James	St Augustine
Whig plumpers	6	2
Tory plumpers	14	6
Whig/Tory split	23	24
ie. total Whig	29	26
total Tory	37	30

b) Ratios of votes cast, vestries compared to Bristol total

1812: Candidate:	Davis (T)	Protheroe (W)	Romilly(W)	Hunt (R)
Bristol total:	39 :	33 :	22 :	6
St James:	57 :	38 :	1 :	0
St Augustine:	52 :	44 :	4 :	0

1820: Candidate:	Davis (T)	Bright (W)	Baillie (W)
Bristol total:	47 :	51 :	2
St James:	63 :	37 :	0
St Augustine:	60 :	40 :	0

1830: Candidate:	Davis (T)	Baillie (W)	Protheroe (W)	Acland (R)
Bristol total:	44 :	30 :	25 :	1
St James:	50 :	23 :	27 :	0
St Augustine:	54 :	38 :	8 :	0

Source: St James / St Augustine Vestry minute-books; *Bristol Poll Books* 1812, 1820, 1830; A.Beaven *Bristol Lists.*

Despite their split votes between Whig and Tory, vestry interventions in national politics firmly align them to the 'high church party'. A recurrent cause of petitioning in the second and third decades of the century was Catholic Emancipation, to which they were implacably hostile. [18] Loyal addresses to the crown followed deaths or successions of monarchs, and there were pledges of

[18] P/StJ/V: 4/5/1819, 7/3/1821

support to George IV, during the Queen Caroline affair, when St James Vestry castigated support for the Queen as 'Irreligion and Blasphemy'. [19]

Bristol parishes were staunch defenders of the social order. In the depression of the winter of 1816, when 'Orator' Hunt was due to address a protest meeting on Brandon Hill, it was the local vestry, St Augustine, which organised the swearing in of 'respectable householders' and 'Principal Inhabitants' as special constables. This event also reveals a political misuse of the charity monies, for the usual distribution of Christmas gifts was postponed, 'to keep the Watchmen to their duty on that day'. Again, in the early 1830's, 'some Gentlemen' of St Paul's vestry were involved in 'the preservation of the public peace', ie. policing reform meetings. [20]

Vestry Toryism points to a final, perhaps self-evident, feature which may have shaped their popular image, their Anglicanism. For example, opposition to John Cam Hobhouse's Select Vestries Bill, from St Thomas and Temple was made on the grounds that the trusts and property '...held for the support of the Church and other pious and charitable uses' might now be administered by non-Anglicans. [21] Of course it may be that these arguments were partly to protect privilege, but the very fact that they were advanced indicates that conformity was the norm for select vestrymen. [22] The identification of parish government with the Church of England would surely have alienated the high proportion of dissenters. [23] However, Bristol had hosted a large and influential dissenting community since the seventeenth century; nor was there any evidence that Anglicanism in the city was lacking in vigour in this period, so this need not have influenced benevolence.

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19 P/StJ/V: 25/10/1820, 27/10/1820; Cobbett's *Political Register* 7/10/1820; Mark Harrison op. cit., pp. 247-8. Sections of the Bristol press presented the division of opinion as socially polarised between rich and poor; recent historical interpretations have stressed the role of the affair as the first articulation of the new middle class ideology of the family, see Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall *Family Fortunes.* op. cit., pp. 150-55.

20 P/St Aug/V 1b): 22/12/1816; P/StP/V 1a): 1/12/1830, 18/6/1832; *Political Register* 28/12/1816.

21 The Act, 1 and 2 William IV, introduced elective vestries on the ratepayer franchise, adoptive if the majority of ratepayers voted; vestry responses: P/StT/V 1: 22/2/1831, P/Tm/La 3: 26/2/1831.

22 This is in contrast to towns where dissenters secured places on open vestries as an alternative locus of power to closed corporations, see Derek Fraser *Urban Politics in Victorian England* op. cit., p.28; Leeds is an example, R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit., pp.123-4; Jonathan Barry has portrayed an atmosphere of ecumenism amongst certain pietist groups in later eighteenth century Bristol, see his 'Piety and the Patient: Medicine and religion in eighteenth century Bristol', Roy Porter ed. *Patients and Practitioners. Lay Perceptions of Medicine in Pre-Industrial Society* (Cambridge, 1985) p.164, but it is unlikely that this extended to committed Anglicans like vestrymen; for the 'sharp edge' which religious antagonism gave to Bristol politics in the eighteenth century see N.Rogers op. cit., pp.268-276.

23 See above, Chapter 2 c).

Turning from these more general aspects of the vestries' public profile to the more specific, could it be that concern with property management was a factor that might have deterred potential testators ? Henry Hunt's suspicions that they were abusing their powers in this area have already been noted, and there was a clear connection between the vestry's roles as parish landlords/feoffees and as trustees of charities since the latter also involved housing stock. [24] Thus a central task was the supervision of the 'church lands', which included those properties left to generate charitable income. It involved the levying of the rent from the lessees, and the collection of fines for renewal of lives, a transaction normally accompanied with a 'guinea for a sealing dinner' - a perk to compensate the vestry for unpaid labour. [25] There were other compensations too, for the extent of the church lands brought considerable power and influence. Temple's properties in the 1820's included 68 'messuages and tenements', of which 6 were pubs, as well as 6 warehouses, and a variety of industrial premises, such as 3 lime-kilns and lime-sheds, 2 stanks, a laboratory, a vinegar works, 2 malthouses, a brewhouse and 2 workshops. [26] There were 823 occupied houses in the parish, with perhaps some 440 parishioners living in properties let by the vestry. [27]

Evidence of apparent self-interest is not hard to find; if the example of Temple in the early 1820's is pursued, 6 out of 12 vestrymen held church property, both as lessees and occupiers of 'messuages and tenements' or of business premises - a warehouse in the case of Preston Edgar, and for William Gwyer, head of a firm of Russia merchants, property which included accommodation, stables and limeworks. The terms seem to have been favourable; for example Thomas Brooks paid £ 3-0-0 p.a. rent for his two 'messuages and tenements' which he held on a 99-year lease, subject to a fine for the renewal of lives of £67-10-0. [28] In St Mary Redcliffe there was a similar story, with eight vestrymen among the lessees, one with three properties. [29]

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[24] See above, Chapter 4 a).
[25] See P/Tm/La 3: 17/10/1823, 22/11/1826.
[26] Manchee op. cit., pp 480-485. A 'stank' was a dam or bank which stopped water.
[27] Estimate based on parish population given in census enumerator's tables, Bristol, 1821.
[28] Manchee II, pp. 480-485; for vestry members P/Tm/La 3: 1820-24 passim., and for the renewal of Brooks' lease, 19/2/1824; I have been unable to discover local sources which allow a systematic comparison with private letting.
[29] St. Mary Redcliffe Lease/land grant book, William Bell held three properties; Manchee II, pp.448-61.

Turning to Hunt's fears of party influence in letting policy, the evidence is less convincing. *Table 5.3* (over) shows party affiliations of lessees in three different parishes, using the 1821 rental records, and the extant poll books of the three nearest preceding elections. Bearing in mind the margin of error (ie. where the lessee and the voter polled are two different people sharing the same name), the analysis points in a similar direction to that of vestrymen's affiliations. Both in terms of total votes cast and in comparison to the city vote, right-of-centre politics is dominant. Again, the most popular ticket is the Whig/Tory split, rather than Tory plumping, indicating a preference for the two-party status quo. The 1812 result shows that the lessees were politically more mixed then the vestrymen (compare *Table 5.2*) with more voting for Romilly and Hunt; indeed one of the Radical voters, William Pimm, a tailor leasing in St John's parish, had actually proposed Hunt's candidature. [30] It would therefore be inappropriate to assert that as a general rule party loyalty played a part in letting policy. It may have in some cases, though even then it is impossible to disentangle party from religious allegiance.

At best, we can say that some vestrymen used their position of trust over church land for private gain, and that it is likely that in some cases party or church allegiance benefitted potential lessees. To what extent would this constitute venality to the contemporary observer ? The notion of conflict of interest has already been shown to run through the literature of the Radical critique. Specifically, Henry Hunt claimed that not only were leases given to favoured individuals, but that the form of letting, on long leases with lives inserted at nominal cost, benefitted the lessee rather than the parish. [31] Evidence from other quarters shows that there was indeed a growing tension between what was thought proper and what improper in the management of public housing. At a national level Oxford MP Ingram Lockhart's 1813 'Bill to prevent the Trustees of Estates, given for Charitable Uses, from granting long and improvident leases' is an obvious example. [32]

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[30] Again assuming they are one and the same person: Manchee II, p.27; see also Henry Hunt *Memoirs of Henry Hunt* (1821), edn. New York 1970, vol III, pp.13, 118-20, 397.

[31] Ibid., pp.131-2.

[32] PP 1812-13 ii p. 1387; House of Commons Journal 10/7/1813; Hansard 8/12/1812; see R.Tompson *The Charity Commission and the Age of Reform* (London, 1979), pp. 90-93 for Romilly's charity legislation which Lockhart's bill closely followed.

Table 5.3: Political affiliations of 1821 lessees of church lands, Temple, St John and St Nicholas.

a) Votes cast, 1784, 1812, 1820

Whig plumpers	33	
Tory plumpers	19	
Whig/Tory split	38	
Whig/Whig split	2	
Tory/Tory split	25	
Radical	2	
ie. total Whig		76
total Tory		105
total Radical		2

b) Ratios of votes cast, lessees compared to Bristol total.

1784: Candidate:	Cruger (W)	Peach (W)	Brickdale (T)	Daubeny (T)
Bristol total:	31 :	4 :	35 :	30
Lessees:	21 :	3 :	40 :	36
1812: Candidate:	Davis (T)	Protheroe (W)	Romilly (W)	Hunt (R)
Bristol total:	39 :	33 :	22 :	6
Lessees:	45 :	39 :	13 :	3
1820: Candidate:	Davis (T)	Bright (W)	Baillie (W)	
Bristol total:	47 :	51 :	2	
Lessees:	48 :	52 :	0	

Source: Lessees: Manchee II pp.26-7, 209-16, 472-85; Voters: *Bristol Poll Books* 1784, 1812, 1820; A.Beaven *Bristol Lists.*

There is evidence to suggest that ideals of probity and accountability which informed Ingram's bill were increasingly supported in Bristol, and may therefore have weighed against the parish. In 1826, ex-Poor-Law governor James Johnson launched a bitter attack on the leasing policy pursued by the Corporation of the Poor on its property. [33] He pointed out that its General Court had laid down a strict code of conduct in 1819 which was not properly adhered to. This expressly forbade the

[33] J.Johnson *Transactions of the Corporation of the Poor* (Bristol, 1826) p.89.

practice of holding leases on lives; fourteen years was to be the absolute maximum, and could only be awarded if the lessee undertook to spend on improvements. [34] A life could not be inserted into a lease to prolong it; instead it had to fall into hand at the designated time. No lease could be granted until the property had been advertised at least twice in the Bristol press. Members of the Corporation of the Poor were entitled to hold a maximum of one lease themselves. Johnson's comment on the gulf between the aspirations of the code and current practice was: '..I am sorry to observe that the laws of the Corporation are very differently observed from those of the Medes and Persians.' [35] There is good reason to think that this criticism may have been equally apposite to vestry leasing policy, not least because the General Court of the Corporation of the Poor actually contained some of the same personnel. [36]

However, in defence of vestry practice, it is possible to justify the high renewal/low rent leasing policy as sensible management. Where deterioration of property occurred the parish would often require a large sum to pay for repairs and rebuilding. Fines for renewals could provide this; alternatively a lease which gave responsibility for repairs to the lessee could be offered, but this would only be attractive if the rents were low. Nor need any of this have deterred *new* donors, since, from the early eighteenth century it had become unusual for endowments to be made in land. So, while there are clear signs that local government leasing policies were now open to criticism there is no certain evidence that this amounted to widespread disapproval.

Nor can we be sure that early nineteenth century vestrymen failed to take advantage of rising rentals on their charity properties. A random sample of charities listed in the Gilbert Returns and the Brougham Commission Report illustrates the rise in annual revenue from minor real estate between 1786 and the 1820s: Aldworth (St. Augustine), increase £12 - £30, Chester (St. James), £13 - £21, Hodges (St. Michael), £4 - £9, Clement (St. Peter), £4-10s - £30-10s, John Jane (St. Phillip

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34 A marginal note in an 1833 property valuation book of the Bristol diocese describes the procedure for calculating the cost of a life: the value of the property was multiplied by seven then divided by the number of people whose lives were to be inserted on the lease, see BRO DC/E/40/39/7.

35 J.Johnson op. cit., p.89.

36 It consisted of 19 churchwardens, and 48 Guardians of the Poor elected at a ward basis in thinly attended meetings of ratepayers; this was the situation after the 'Bristol Poor Act' 3 Geo IV p.18; for attendance at wardmote elections see analysis of Municipal Corporation Commissioners' Report in J.Kington op. cit., p.19 of section, and William Fripp's evidence to the *Select Committee on Select and other Vestries*, PP 1830 iv p.665, where he mentions an attendance of three ratepayers.

and Jacob), £8 - £11. [37] No substantive conclusion can be drawn from this, given the absence of evidence for comparative commercial rentals, and lack of firmer detail of the size and condition of the properties. However, the growth of receipts clearly does not suggest financial incompetence. [38]

This section has provided a general survey of Bristol's select vestries in the era of the first Charity Commissions. It has broadly confirmed the picture of the vestry as bastion of the Tory/Anglican establishment and has established the possibility of both self-interest on the part of vestrymen and political/religious favouritism with respect to housing management. These findings are not in themselves sufficient to account for the marked demise in endowment to the parish, and we must therefore turn to a closer consideration of the charities.

b) The select vestries and their charities.

In this section the cause of the decline of parochial endowment will be sought in records of vestry charity administration. Were there for example difficulties in maintaining charity property, and what were the investment implications of the shift to endowment of stock ? What actual criticisms were voiced by the Charity Commissioners ? Were there concerns over the means of disbursement of charity doles, perhaps because they were dispensed to party loyalists ? The search for the answers to these questions will centre on the period before and after the Brougham Commissioners' visit, and is based largely on St. James parish. There are two justifications for the choice of this case-study. Due to its position on the northern fringe of the old city, population growth in St. James continued well into the nineteenth century, unlike the smaller city centre parishes which were crammed into an increasingly commercial urban core. It therefore experienced an escalation of need. Also, its vestry had more charities in its trust than any other group in the city, including the Corporation, though of course their value was less. [39]

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[37] PP 1816 xvia *Abstract of Returns of Charitable Donations for Benefit of Poor Persons: - 26 Geo. III, 1786*, pp.442-3, 446-7, 456-7, 452-3, 454-5; PP 1843 xvi, xvii *Analytical Digest of the Reports Made By the Commissioners of Inquiry into Charities*, pp.238-9, 240-1, 246-7, 250-1, 252-3.

[38] For a discussion of post-reform rental increases, see above Chapter 4 c).

[39] According to the Commissioners the five parishes with the greatest number of endowments in 1822 were St James (66), Temple (61), St Nicholas (60), St Thomas (59), and St Augustine (56) while the Corporation only administered 43; see Manchee I and II.

As a prelude to analysis, St. James' charity portfolio will be brought into view. *Table 5.4* sets out the holdings, showing both value and charitable heads, with the same taxonomy as the whole city survey presented in Chapter 3. Broadly, the St. James experience conforms to that of the city as a

Table 5.4: St. James Charities, 1680-1870

Decade commencing	*Church*	*Poor*	*Elderly*	*Loans*	*Value (new income p.a.)* £ s d
1680		6	1		9 10 0
1690		4	1		8 4 0
1700		1			4 0 0
1710	1	5			7 11 0
1720	2	2	2		20 0 6
1730	2	3	1		7 19 0
1740		2	1		6 7 0
1750	1	7			20 0 0
1760		3	1		14 6 0
1770			3		37 0 0
1780					
1790			2		7 0 0
1800	1	2	1	1	195 4 0
1810					
1820					
1830	1	1			16 10 0
1840		1			2 14 7
1850		1			17 0 0
1860		1			6 14 0
1870					

Source: Manchee I, pp.397-481; PP 1843 XVI, XVII *Analytical Digest of the Reports Made By the Commissioners of Inquiry into Charities*; PP 1873 LI *Copies of the General Digest of Endowed Charities*; St. James Vestry List of Charities, 1915 BRO P/St J/Ch/92.

whole. In terms of numbers the late-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth century peaks are typical, as is the brief rally at the start of the nineteenth, preceding the long-term decline. The value of the endowments is erratic, though the 1800-10 figure again conforms to the temporary revival of endowment which characterised the period; in this case almost the whole amount is accounted for by one major donor, Mary Lewis, who left an estate worth over £ 4,000. Of the 77 endowments

surveyed 21 took the form of property yielding rents, though this form of gift did not persist beyond 1734. Since this predates the decline of endowed charity by several decades it would be incorrect to suggest that the potential problems with housing management can be invoked as a deterrent factor, though, as will be shown, property proved to be most difficult to administer. In addition to the impact of the Mortmain Act, the disappearance of this type of trust can be explained by the availability of new forms of public securities in which cash could safely be invested to produce a predictable return.

Charities began to invest in the restructured National Debt once the dust from the South Sea Bubble crisis had settled; P.Dickson suggests that the period between 1720 and 1750 was when trustee accounts, many of them charitable, started to figure prominently in long-term government loans, particularly the fixed-interest annuities of the South Sea Company which were seen as the safest return. [40] According to the Charity Commissioners parish funds were used to buy Old South Sea annuities in 1777, but this is unlikely to have been the earliest move in this direction. The first St. James will to speak of the endowed sum being 'put out at interest' was that of Alice James in 1727, while 1789 saw the first gift to be actually bestowed in the form of stock, in this case 3% consols. [41] By the 1820's the vestry's portfolio was spread over Navy five per cents, Old South Sea Annuities and 3% consols.

The extent to which charity investment had shifted towards stock had already been made clear by the Gilbert returns of 1787-8. The findings for the city as a whole (*Table 5.5 a)* over) do not differentiate very precisely the public funds chosen, but emphatically demonstrate their role in the generation of income. Although the Brougham Commissioners did not produce a similar tabulation, St Michael submitted their investment details in 1821-22 (*Table 5 b)* over) and these indicate a shift towards 4% stock in the interim period. Whether this trend towards higher denomination securities constitutes sounder management on the part of St Michael was unclear at the time and cannot be

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[40] P.Dickson *The Financial Revolution in England* (London, 1967) pp. 283-4, 299-300; for details of the range of public securities available in the eighteenth century see P.Dickson, part II passim., and J.Brewer *The Sinews of Power* (London, 1989) pp.114-126

[41] Manchee I op. cit., pp.444, 463.

answered now; against the higher return in the short term of 4% and 5% stock has to be set the far greater market in 3%'s, and the relative improbability of their conversion downwards. [42] In the absence of data on local property values in the period we cannot compare the relative profitability of stock and land, but the extent to which resources had shifted to securities indicates that the chief concern was not the margin of return, but the desirability of avoiding property management.

Table 5.5 a) Capital resources of Bristol charitable trusts, 1787-88

	£	s	d
£ 3% stock.	85,429	7	3
£ 4% stock	15,403	6	4
£ 5% stock	2,146	5	5
Mortgage, personal,Turnpike etc	65,011	9	4

Table 5.5 b): Capital resources of St Michael's parish charitable trusts, 1821-22

	£	s	d
4% consols	1,685	12	2
3% consols	319	10	0
3% reduced	475	15	4

Source: 5.5 a) PP 1816 iii pp. 826-7; *5.5 b):* Manchee II, pp. 148-152

Was the legacy of the 'Financial Revolution' to stimulate or to dim the charitable impulse ? The mid-eighteenth century peaks in volume of Bristol endowments correspond to the period in which trusts in general and charities in particular were beginning to appear as major public creditors to the National Debt. [43] It is therefore tempting to speculate that the existence of a growing market in public securities, offering a steady return without the overheads and nuisance attached to property administration, encouraged potential testators. Unfortunately this conception of the charitable as rational actors making a cost-benefit evaluation of the prospects for their endowments begins to break down in the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The decades 1770-1800 have been

[42] E.Hargreaves *The National Debt* (London, 1930) pp. 113-4.
[43] See above, note 40.

identified as the period in which the long-term decline of endowed charity sets in, yet this was also the period in which the yield of consols crept up from the region of 3.5% in the 1750's and 1760's to new heights: 5.4% in 1784 and 5.9% in 1797-8. [44] Admittedly the unusually high returns available during the Napoleonic Wars do coincide with the brief revival of endowment, but this may equally have been motivated by Evangelicalism or the heightened demand for welfare. What is certain is that the yield of consols settled back to a reliable, predictable return somewhere above 3% in the mid- nineteenth century, while endowed charity lost popularity. In opting for voluntary subscription charity rather than endowment the philanthropists of the nineteenth century were, in a sense, defying economic logic.

Turning from investment of charity funds to the distribution of the income generated, is it likely that a growing disenchantment with the process of giving was a deterrent to the beneficent ? It seems that informal approaches were preferred prior to the Brougham Commission, with considerable power in the hands of individual vestrymen. In St. James proportions of the annual gifts in money and clothing were allocated to each of the members shortly before St. Thomas's day 'for his personal distribution'. [45] £ 2-11s was the amount given to each in 1809, with an indivisible surplus of 18s 6d handed over to the vestry clerk. [46] Family income of the Bristol labouring poor as somewhere in the region of 10s per week, so this was a generous sum. [47] The weekly bread doles (in 1822, 24 loaves) were given to appointees of the churchwardens or the clerk, 'mostly women', and chosen from those 'in greatest want', with a preference for those who actually worshipped regularly at the parish church. [48]

This emphasis on the personal distributive capacity of the select vestry is suggestive of a 'face-to-face' basis for the charitable relationship, in which recipients of the gift were already known to the vestrymen. If so, then a range of questions arise. Were the gifts used primarily as a means of

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44 B.Mitchell *British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge, 1988) p.678.
45 Manchee I, p.414, recorded under Alderman Kitchen's charity.
46 P/St J/V/6: 20/12/1810.
47 Frederick Morton Eden *The State of the Poor* (1797) edn. London (1928) p.189.
48 Manchee I p.414.

cultivating deference and social cohesion rather than relieving poverty ? Were they deployed to maximise personal or party gain ? And did this style of giving engender resentment ?

Certainly the public display of vestry charity was an important means of cultivating the prestige which had customarily attended the job. When the parish perambulation of St Augustine took place the vestrymen were followed by the boys of three endowed schools, Colston's, St Michael and St Augustine. After what must have been busy procession '..the school-boys and boys of the Parish were regaled with Plumb *(sic)* cakes and a most excellent subscription dinner.' [49] Here was a ritual which sought to enforce the customary deferential bonds within the city between church, poor, and the merchant elite who dominated that particular parish. [50]

There is also evidence that it was not always those most in need who were the recipients. The Brougham Commissioners were concerned by the discretionary means of bestowing the gifts, and highlighted two defects of the system of distribution: its tendency to overlook the precise directions of the testator and its unregulated nature. [51] 12 of St. James' 66 charities were described as failing to fulfill the wishes of the donor as set out in the original will, two because they were given in cash not bread, the rest because they did not reach the specified target group. For example, Alice James' will of 1727 had established a Christmas cash gift to two poor widows; the principal had gone into the parish account and its interest, calculated at 4%, became part of an indiscriminate grouping of all the money gifts dispensed annually by the vestrymen without reference to the target group. [52] An alternative was proposed, apparently designed to eradicate opportunities for favouritism: '..a list of persons, whom the members of the vestry were desirous of proposing to receive the benefit of the charity, should be produced at the vestry, and there agreed upon, previous to the distribution.' [53] Suitably chastised, the vestry acknowledged that in future '...their application of the limited gifts ...

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[49] P/St Aug/V/1b): 21/4/1815, 4/5/1815

[50] See above note 6, and for a discussion of 'beating the bounds' in rural parishes, Bob Bushaway *By Rite: Custom, Ceremony and Community in England 1700-1880* (London, 1982) pp.

[51] Manchee I, pp. 444-5, 447-8.

[52] Ibid., pp.444-5.

[53] Ibid., p.447.

particularly in the money charities are intended for a class of person answering the description of the almspeople...'. [54]

However, it is important not to romanticize, nor condemn, 'face to face' distribution as inherently personalized and paternal. [55] The system operated by the applicant approaching the vestryman for aid, rather than waiting hopefully for a dole from a patron: a vestry minute of 1803 ordered that a list of names of all recipients should be handed to the churchwarden '..to prevent imposition by the application of the same person to some other Vestryman..' [56] Needy parishioners might support a claim by a signed recommendation from a third party, such as ex-employers, landlords or known figures in the parish. Surgeon J.Tucker's reference for the Wilkins family is fairly typical:

> 'The Bearer and her husband are industrious people who have endeavoured as much as in their power to support themselves and two children by honest means, but as her husband cannot work on account of the frost they are much distressed. They are real and deserving objects of charity.' [57]

From this it may be possible to extrapolate the role of the vestryman as intermediary between the parish and its poor. Rather than acting as 'Lord Bountiful' to a known client group, his job was to assess applicants, sometimes directly, sometimes via a third party recommendation, in terms of family conditions, character and cause of need to determine whether they were deserving poor. It cannot even be assumed that attendance at Anglican service was an important consideration: the Brougham Commissioners admonished the vestry for failing to observe this instruction with regard to James Jeanes' clothing charity. [58]

Before concluding that contemporaries probably viewed charity distribution as essentially equitable, if occasionally incompetent, the Radical charge that the gifts rewarded electoral loyalty must be considered. [59] Probably only a few parochial charities were actually prone to this type of

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54 P/St J/V/7: 1/2/1836.
55 Mary Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., ch.6.
56 P/St J/V/6: 12/12/1803
57 P/St J/Ch/8: the evidence comes from the winter of 1814-15, another disastrous time when additional sources of relief had to be found, and the vestry was required not only to identify paupers deserving of parish aid, but also to advise St Peter's Hospital of those they might help.
58 Manchee I op. cit., pp 449-450.
59 Henry Hunt *Memoirs of Henry Hunt* III, op. cit., pp.131-2; *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Bribery at Elections* (1835) pp.383-4, questions 6438-6442, 6447-6451 .

abuse. These were trusts which specified freemen or their families as target recipients, an instruction which would oblige the vestry to have some record or means of checking who held freedoms. Though perhaps innocent in intent such a record would amount to a list of voters which might then be misused. This was a particular concern, as general elections in the city had historically witnessed spectacular increases in the number of freedoms held as a means of increasing the support for one or other party. [60] *Table 5.6* (over) uses the voting records of recipients of Alderman Kitchen's charity in St. Mary Redcliffe, to assess whether the charge of bribery can stick. [61]

As in the political affiliation studies of the vestrymen and the church lands lessees, it presents both an overview of total votes and a comparison of recipients, from a sample of twelve years' charity payments in the period 1804-36. There were usually four annual beneficiaries of the gift, who received 10s at Christmas, in some cases for several years running. The assumption is therefore made that if the fund was used to bribe it was as a reward for long-term loyalty, rather than as an immediate pay-off given at the time of the poll; hence the overall survey rather than a study of election years only. As with the two previous affiliation tables it is striking that the most popular ticket was the Whig/Tory split vote. In the elections where the Tories fielded two candidates, 1784 and 1835, recipients were loyal to the 'blues', but such a platform was unusual for the borough. A preference for a result representing the status quo was the norm; where there was a choice between Old and Reform Whigs, in 1832 for instance, it was Baillie, a candidate cool towards reform, rather than Protheroe, who picked up the votes. This trend to the status quo is also evident if recipients in the actual election years are studied. In 1812, 1830 and 1835 the same pattern was repeated: of the two out of four freemen who cast a vote, both selected a Whig/Tory split.

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[60] Ibid., questions 6357-6372; N.Rogers op. cit., pp.286-8; Norman Gash *Politics in the Age of Peel* (London, 1952), p.117; Jonathan Barry, in a personal communication, notes an election-time boom in freedoms as early as 1660.

[61] St Mary Redcliffe has been chosen in preference to St James: i) because the former parish kept a thorough 'Gift Book' recording the names of recipients; ii) because St James only had two trusts which specified 'burgesses' (ie. freemen) and it simply disregarded the instruction and merged the interest in with its general cash fund, a practice for which it was rebuked by the Commission; iii) St Mary Redcliffe by contrast had actually taken an endowment, Alderman Robert Kitchen's, which was targeted at 'poor people within Bristol', and designated it a freeman charity; iv) also it was St Mary Redcliffe which was under suspicion in the questioning of William Fripp by the Hobhouse Committee on Select Vestries, see Manchee, p. 415, 135, II p. 86; PP 1830 iv *Minutes of Evidence before Select Committee on Select and Other Vestries* 11th March 1830, pp.662-3.

Table 5.6: Party affiliation of recipients of Alderman Kitchen's charity, 1804-36

a) Votes cast, 1784, 1812, 1820, 1830, 1832, 1835

Whig plumpers	1
Tory plumpers	4
Whig/Tory split	47
Whig/Whig split	1
Tory/Tory split	11
ie. total Whig	51
total Tory	73

b) Ratios of votes cast compared to Bristol total

1784: Candidate:	Cruger (W)	Peach (W)	Brickdale (T)	Daubeny (T)
Bristol total:	31 :	4 :	35 :	30
Recipients:	0 :	0 :	50 :	50
1812: Candidate:	Davis (T)	Protheroe (W)	Romilly (W)	Hunt (R)
Bristol total:	39 :	33 :	22 :	6
Recipients:	50 :	50 :	0 :	0
1820: Candidate:	Davis (T)	Bright (W)	Baillie (W)	
Bristol total:	47 :	51 :	2	
Recipients:	52 :	48 :	0	
1830: Candidate:	Davis (T)	Baillie (W)	Protheroe (W)	Acland (R)
Bristol total:	44 :	30 :	25 :	1
Recipients:	50 :	19 :	31 :	0
1832: Candidate:	Vyvyan (T)	Baillie (W)	Protheroe (R)*	Williams (R)*
Bristol total:	29 :	25 :	24 :	22
Recipients:	50 :	46 :	4 :	0
				* *Reformer*
1835: Candidate:	Miles (C)	Vyvyan (C)	Baillie (L)	Hobhouse (L)
Bristol total:	33 :	29 :	22 :	16
Recipients:	46 :	31 :	15 :	8

Source: St Mary Redcliffe Gift Books, 1797-1822, 1822-1847; *Bristol Poll Books* 1784, 1812, 1820, 1830, 1832, 1835; A.Beaven *Bristol Lists.*

None of this solves the problem of whether the trusts were used to buy votes. There is a marked 'right of centre' slant, though again it may be that the key determinant in choice of recipient was not his responsiveness to a bribe, nor his politics, but his Anglicanism, which in turn inclined him towards the 'high church party'. The circumstantial evidence, coupled with the answers given to the two Select Committees, prompts a cautious acceptance that some bribery took place, but the notion that vestry charity policy was seriously subverted by Tory electoral needs must be put in perspective. [62]

Consideration of the impact of the Charity Commission's visit also weighs against the image of the corrupt vestry, since their prime concern was to castigate inefficiency. Nor did their visit inspire swift remedial action, suggesting vestry perception that the requirement the Commissioners had placed on them was that of a considered procedural reform rather than a drastic purge. The first summons to the St James vestry clerk was in January 1821, and the main interviews and consultation of the documents in March 1822. [63] Almost two more years elapsed before the vestry formed a sub-committee to consider the report; it was in February 1826 that their recommendations were presented, and a further three months until their enactment [64]

When changes finally did come their rather limited nature suggests that they were not viewed as matters of pressing public concern. Four problem areas had emerged in the report: the method of distributing the money gifts, the failure to comply with precision to the testators' wishes, the slipshod method of accounting which had led the books into 'ambiguity and error', and the poor management of property which had brought about a deficit in the payments. The vestry went some way to changing its method of distribution: in 1827 the churchwardens presented a list of recipients to the vestrymen prior to distribution, indicating that a wider vetting process was now in operation. [65] However, the personalised dispensation was retained, as the more formal itemisation in the mid-nineteenth century charity books confirms. In 1845 the allocation of money gifts ranged

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62 PP 1830 iv, p.665; *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Bribery at Elections* (1835) pp.382-4, discussed above, Chapter 4.
63 P/StJ/V/6 passim.
64 P/StJ/V/7.
65 P/StJ/V/7: 5/1/1827.

from £ 6-14s for the churchwardens, to £ 3-14s for the average vestryman; each also gave out one coat, one cloak, two gowns, a pair of men's shoes, a pair of women's shoes, a man's and a woman's hose, 3/4 ton of coal and 54 half quartern loaves. [66] There may have been a more satisfactory check on recipients, but clearly the prestige, patronage and personal fulfillment which the old system offered vestrymen had forestalled greater rationalisation. Just as we need to guard against an over-romanticised notion of personal distribution before reform, we also need to be sceptical of the extent to which reform actually altered procedures.

Comments on defects of accounting and record-keeping were made with regard to 21 trusts, most typically the observation that sums generated by separate endowments '..do not distinctly appear in the accounts till the year 1809'. [67] This was the year in which the new parish of St Paul was created out of St James, necessitating a thorough review of charity funds prior to dividing them on a 35:65 ratio. Unfortunately this attempt to improve the book-keeping did not rectify the accumulation of errors; the commissioners showed that the parish was obliged to distribute £ 241-1s p.a., but its income was only £ 191-18s- 10d. [68] It was the difficulties of long-term property management, combined with poor accounting which had created the deficit.

Nonetheless, it is unlikely that this created widespread public concern, since the vestry could claim to have acted responsibly, within the letter of the law as it was understood. The inevitable problem with investing charitable trust funds in housing is that ultimately money has to be spent on repairs and rebuilding which will either diminish the capital or soak up the interest. St James had faced this problem in 1777 by offering low-rent leases obliging the lessees to pay for upkeep. [69] Income from high renewal fines was invested in government stock, but here the confusion began, for the fines were merged in with the rest of the parish funds, with no attempt to distinguish the charity income and protect it from being drawn on for general purposes such as church repair. Did this assumption that only rentals from charity property should count as its proceeds, while fines for

[66] P/StJ/Ch/11/6.
[67] Manchee I op. cit., p. 441.
[68] P/St J/V/7: 1/2/1826.
[69] Manchee I p.467.

renewals should augment the general income, constitute sharp practice, a genuine mistake, or legally valid behaviour ? [70] St. Mary Redcliffe was caught in the same trap by the Commissioners with one of its housing trusts and decided to fight the matter through the Court of Chancery, arguing that it was simply following a precedent dating back to the mid-17th century. Although this was rejected the fact that the case was brought at all indicates the uncertainty over the legal niceties of the issue. St. James was more co-operative, reimbursing the charities through sales of stock, and reversing its housing policy, with lowered fines and higher rents. [71]

This study of vestry charity administration offers few clues as to why trusts endowed to the parish were entering a decline. The system offered scope for abuse for personal or party advantage, but there is no evidence that this occurred on a large scale. Inefficiency or ignorance were to blame for problems, where the trustees were volunteers never in place long enough to learn the complexities of the task. Yet it was their role as members of the church community which had always made them the most fitting choice as trustees. Housing investment, the area most prone to error, was giving way to investment in stock which offered a painless and predictable source of income. We may wonder why, after the intervention of the Commission had pointed the way to restore the trusts, their decline actually accelerated ?

Yet even the more benevolent vestrymen rejected the opportunity to establish trusts. John Bangley, who first served as a churchwarden in 1804, had been with St James vestry through the reform era. On his death in 1837 he entrusted his bequest not to his parish but to the Bristol Royal Infirmary. [72] Rather than reflecting a conflict of loyalties, this was a simple acknowledgement that the balance between the urban structures which delivered welfare had altered irreversibly. We must now examine this changing balance.

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[70] This problem was closely related to the legal uncertainties surrounding the application of surplus assets, see Gareth Jones op. cit., pp.91-3, 153-6.

[71] St. Mary Redcliffe Vestry Minutes 1822-1845: 9/12/1828, 26/2/1830; BRO P/St J/V/7: 1/2/1826, 30/6/1826

[72] Ibid., 4/3/1837.

c) The parish and the management of poverty

This section will argue that the decline of parochial endowment is best understood in the light of what the Webbs called the 'strangling' and 'Death of the Parish' in the early nineteenth century - in other words that the increasing irrelevance of the parish as a unit of local government discouraged testators. [73] While the Webbs traced this process through legislation, firstly the limited efforts to democratize the vestry, and secondly the Poor Law Amendment with its removal of poor rate responsibilities, the Bristol case-study will offer a more nuanced periodization. [74] Discussion will centre on two themes: the resolution of an ongoing tension between churchwardens and Corporation of the Poor over rating, and the broader acceptance, from the 1810s, that the parish was now ill-suited to address the complexities of urban government.

It was as mediator between the policies of the city and the capacity of the parish to pay for them that the vestry exercised its most significant role, at least until the 1820's. The churchwardens in particular played a vital part in the assessment of the various local taxes: in the early nineteenth century, the Poor Rates, Dock Dues, Pitching and Paving and Watch Tax. This was an increasingly awkward role. On one hand they pursued their traditional defence of the rate-payers' interest, but on the other they had to acknowledge the increasing demand for poor relief, sanitary reform and so on. The kudos which responsibility had once brought to unpaid officers was withering in the face of an administrative burden that the tradition of amateur service was ill-equipped to deal with.

Historically parish officers attempted to obstruct over-eager Corporation spenders; it had been their objections to the rating policy of the Corporation of the Poor in 1712 and 1713 that had led to the Act which first constituted the churchwardens as Guardians. [75] The exigencies of urban growth in the nineteenth century brought new strains. Early minutes of the newly-established Pitching and Paving Commissioners, in 1806-7, display friction between the valuation of the Commissioners, and

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[73] Sidney and Beatrice Webb *The Parish and the County* op. cit., pp.146, 171; David Eastwood's *Governing Rural England: Tradition and Transformation in Local Government, 1780-1840* (Oxford, 1994) offers a similar chronology of the demise of local government, though he is critical of the Webbs' 'Fabian teleology' (p.3) in underplaying the efficacy of the unreformed system, .

[74] Ibid. ch.iv; the Webbs stress the shortcomings of the Sturges Bourne Acts of 1818-9.

[75] E.E.Butcher ed. *The Bristol Corporation of the Poor 1696-1834* (Bristol, 1932), pp. 88-91 for the city's petitions to Parliament to raise the rates; also J.Kington op. cit., 'English Municipal Commission' p.19; Jonathan Barry 'The parish in civic life' op. cit., pp.168-9; there was a significant ideological element in this dispute, with Tory parish officers seizing the opportunity to rein in the power of the Whig Corporation of the Poor and enforce a religious test on guardians.

the churchwardens, who were personally liable for whatever they failed to collect. [76] Vestry minutes also abound with complaints: for instance, in 1818 Temple found the collection of Dock Dues '..not well executed in principle and is peculiarly heavy on those parishes which abound in poor population.', and set about co-ordinating the other parishes to lobby the Dock Director to change the law. [77]

Unsurprisingly, it was over the matter of the poor rates that tensions between the churchwardens and other authorites came to a head. Prior to 1823 the procedure for collecting the rate was that a total amount for the city was arrived at by the Guardians, the aldermen assessed the contribution of the different parishes, while the churchwardens and overseers then rated the individual properties and employed collectors to extract the payments. [78] Problems arose over the inevitable shortfalls, for though the general rule was that no one renting a tenement worth £ 10+ p.a. should be exempt, the churchwardens and overseers also exercised a pastoral function and could allow exemption if '...in their discretion that any such persons are by poverty or otherwise unable to pay.' [79] Deficiencies owing to exemptions or other causes were then added on to the next year's rating: St Paul, for example, exempted 158 persons in 1819, and had a cumulative deficiency of £ 502-13s added to its bill. [80] This led to a tougher line with non-payers. 1822 was the first time in the St Paul vestry minutes that the churchwardens were asked to bring lists of defaulters, while for Temple the crunch had come slightly earlier, with the Vestry deciding in 1818 to 'go round the Parish in order to ascertain who among the list of Defaulters may be enabled to pay,' following stern letters from the authorities. The sources point to the a curtailing of the vestry's pastoral function in this respect, and a tightening of their role as tax-collecting functionary. [81]

The turning-point came with the Corporation's presentation of the Bristol Poor Bill to Parliament in 1821. It gained support from vestries for its proposal to relieve churchwardens of rate collection,

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76 BRO 'Acts, Orders and Proceeding of the Commissioners of Pitching and Paving - No.1, Minute Book, 1806-7' see eg. 30/9/1806, 23/12/1806, 10/2/1807

77 P/Tm/La 3: 27/3/1818.

78 J.Kington op. cit., 'English Municipal Commission' p.19; BRO *Bristol Poor Act* (Bristol, 1823) 3 Geo IV 25th. March 1823.

79 P/St P/V 1(a): 1/18/1817.

80 Ibid.: 7/1819; the total number of households in St Paul recorded in the 1821 census was 1,076, but it is not clear whether the exemptions were from the total households or just those rateable.

81 Ibid., 10/12/1822, 16/6/1824; P/Tm/La 3: 16/12/1818

yet in retrospect this piece of legislation marked an important surrender of power. [82] When it finally became law two years later the parish still retained the right to carry out the local assessment, but all else was gone: the Court of the Corporation of the Poor now set the total rate and appointed Collectors, while the apportionment between the parishes was made by the Mayor and two Justices. Appeals against the assessment were heard by the vestry in the first instance, but now the Justices were given the ultimate right to reduce or discharge liability '..on account of poverty, or any other account whatsoever'. [83] This marked the end of a long process by which the most crucial function of the parish in English local government, the control over rates, was devolved to a city-wide authority. For Bristol, the 'death of the parish' ante-dated 1834. [84]

In this transfer of power lies the key to understanding the decline of the select vestry. It was not a simple matter of efficiency which necessitated the reform: a vestry such as St. James was doing much to adopt classic bureaucratic features, such as division of labour, incentives and formal accounting. The critical factor was the enormous rise in the poor rate, which caught the churchwardens uncomfortably between the demands of the Guardians and the resentment of the rate-payers. [85] Where once the job had carried status, responsibility and a certain amount of patronage, it now brought excessive stress for an unpaid public servant. Yet its derogation was a signal of the increasing marginalization of the parish in local government.

The long withdrawal from poor-rate management is one aspect of the waning of the select vestry, but not the whole story. An attempt was made to create a new working partnership between the Corporation and the vestries to meet additional poor relief demands in the exceptionally depressed winter of 1816-17. [86] This exposed the limited capacities of the parish, and in so doing accelerated their removal from poor relief activities. The project began with a letter from the mayor to all the vestries requesting them to 'ascertain the extent of the distress of the poor therein, arising from want

82 P/St J/V: 7/2/21; P/StP/V: 17/3/1821.
83 *Bristol Poor Act* op. cit. p.71.
84 Sidney and Beatrice Webb *The Parish and the County* op. cit., pp.171-2.
85 The poor rate rose from £ 13,812 in 1800 to £ 35,000 in 1833, see ch.2, *Table 2.2*, and ch.3, *Fig.3.3*; see also David Eastwood's study of local government in rural Oxfordshire, op. cit. Parts Two and Three, where in addition to stressing the crisis of the Old Poor Law, the erosion of local power also owed much to the need for professional policing and the greater state control of punishment.
86 The poor-rate leapt from £ 15,500 in 1816 to £ 20,500 in 1817, while the number of out-poor for the year stood at 5,395, almost double the 1815 figure of 2,787.

of employment' and then to report back with plans of work creation to overcome the problem. [87] A house to house survey was undertaken, with vestries engaging the help of their 'respectable inhabitants', graphically revealing the scale of poverty. [88] When the returns began to reach the Council House the Corporation responded by establishing the 'Bristol Subscription for the Benefit of the Labouring Poor', modelled on a voluntary society, with a committee made up of parish representatives, and lists of names and amounts subscribed placed in the local press. [89] Individual parishes planned their own relief schemes within this framework. St. Augustine began with the distribution of money gifts to the amount of five pounds for immediate relief with distributions of soup tickets and biscuits from the vestry room each morning. By January coal and potatoes were also being given out to claimants with a written recommendation from subscribers. [90] St James had decided that 'no pecuniary advantage should be granted except as wages or in very peculiar cases'. Their approach was to buy bulk amounts of 'provisions', bread and potatoes, and coal, which were then either given to the poor or offered for purchase by them at a reduced rate. Instead of the needy applying to the church the vestry was divided into four sub-committees which methodically visited each street in the parish, recording all those receiving aid in a register. [91]

The post-war slump seemed to point to a new direction in relief policy spearheaded by the parish, combining its administrative skills and its local commitment with the dynamic fund-raising approach of voluntarism. Why was this not maintained ? Subsequent years saw equally staggering leaps in the poor rate, 1817-18 and 1826-27 for instance, yet as we have seen, responsibility was increasingly devolved entirely to the Corporation of the Poor. [92] Ultimately the explanation lies with scale. The size of the problem of welfare relief was better confronted by the bureaucratic

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87 P/St J/Ch/3 'Minute-book: fund to relieve poor unemployed': 8/12/1816; for a full dicussion of this episode, see Martin Gorsky 'Experiments in Poor Relief: Bristol 1816-1817' *The Local Historian* 25, 1 (1995) pp.17-30.

88 P/St J/Ch/3 'Minute-book': 8/12/1816, and see BRO 'Abstract of Returns' P/StJ/Ch/3, also *Bristol Mercury* 13/1/1817. A figure of 7.5% unemployed for the whole of the old city parishes is speculative, and probably a considerable underestimate; a month after conducting their survey St James vestry was notifying the mayor that '..a very large number of distressful cases has come under their cognisance since they have begun to distribute relief.' ibid., 13/1/1816. The lack of a standard format questionnaire complicates matters: some parishes entered a return for unemployed labourers only, some differentiated those receiving parish pay, some counted wives and children and others families only.

89 *Bristol Mercury* 20/1/1817

90 P/St Aug/V/1b): 7/1/1817.

91 P/St J/Ch/3: 24/12/1816.

92 1817: £ 20,500, 1818: £ 27,500; 1826: £ 26,000, 1827: £36,000.

efficiency of city-wide institutions than the unpaid efforts of the vestrymen. This can be shown with reference to employment schemes, and the subsequent relations between the vestries and other organisations.

The 1816-17 slump provides a relevant illustration. Impetus for the poverty survey had come from the mayor's proposal that the vestries put forward employment schemes to deal with the crisis. The St. James report had pointed out that '..from the peculiar nature of their usual occupations it will be an arduous undertaking to find adequate employment', though it had suggested two road-building schemes. In the end the vestry could do no more than employ one individual as an extra Constable 'to keep the Churchyard clear of idle boys and other disorderly persons', not, perhaps, a very vital task. [93] St. Augustine took a more imaginative step, petitioning the Merchant Venturers for permission to work a quarry they owned at Hotwells. [94] They quickly found their idea appropriated by the Governor of St. Peter's who claimed that all employment schemes should be under the aegis of the Corporation of the Poor. Not only this, but by February the Corporation of the Poor was claiming a proportion of all subscriptions raised, a concrete representation of the need for a city-wide institution to tackle a problem of this scale.

This supersession of vestry paternalism by a larger bureaucracy, both in the short-term crisis of 1816-17 and in rating policy over the longer term, led to a changing response. In some vestry records it is possible to discern an increasingly obstructive attitude to other civic bodies, which seems to mark a new sentiment: those other organisations assuming responsibilities funded by the rates should not expect any further help from the parish once the tax was in. Thus the response of St Paul's vestry in the winter of 1820 to a call from the Governor of St Peter's Hospital for parish subscription to help the poor over another inclement winter:

> 'Resolved unanimously that however much the present state of the Poor is to be deplored yet it is the opinion of the meeting from experience on former occasions that parish subscriptions being in their amount so inconsiderable and in their

[93] P/St J/Ch/3: 16/12/1816, 3/2/1817.
[94] P/St Aug/V/1b): 13/1/1817, 14/2/1817.

application so ineffectual and tending only to draw from the purses of the humane and charitable whilst it screens the Rich and affluent are not desirable. And that in order to make the burthen equal and the relief to the poor more permanant the legitimate authorities from their information and experience are best calculated to distribute the same.' [95]

It would be hard to find a franker call for a new 'rational' approach, coupled with an acknowledgement of the inability of the parish to meet the demands of the changing city. Other sources from 1832 point to a similar reluctance to adapt to a new role. The Board of Health wrote to St Paul to enlist the vestry's help in whitewashing and ventilating premises and supporting a cleanliness and dietary campaign amongst the poor. Not even the threat of Cholera would prompt the vestry to co-operate: '..they see no reason at present for their personal exertions or for interfering with the Duties of the Guardians of the Poor of St Peter's Hospital.' [96] Nor could the hapless Board persuade St James to cancel the annual Fair on the grounds that it would promote the spread of cholera; both sides lobbied Lord Melbourne, who finally forced the vestry to climb down. [97] St Thomas was slightly more amenable, but grudgingly so, offering £41: '..under the peculiar exigencies of this time be distributed in aid of prevention of the Pestilential Cholera, But with this express consideration that this be not brought in as a precedent.' [98]

Conclusion

The first part of this chapter pointed to some of the weaknesses of Bristol select vestries: that work was rewarded with status, not pay, that procedures were not efficient, and that there were opportunities for self and party-interest in jobbing and leasing policy. Though these attributes attracted criticism and placed stress on the vestry, other evidence pointed to its capacity for bureaucratic modernization. More significant was the growing irrelevance of the vestry in what had previously been its chief function, the management of the poor through the rating system. This

95 P/St P/V/1a): 12/1/1820.
96 Ibid., 20/7/1832.
97 P/St J/V: 10/8/1832, 27/8/1832.
98 P/St T/V 1: 9/1/ 1832.

accelerated the decline of the select vestry as an arm of urban administration in the early nineteenth century, and by extension, its viability as a channel of philanthropy. [99] Potential donors perceived the marginalization of the parish, but did not shift the site of endowment elsewhere. Trusts required a perpetual body to administer them, but as we have seen the reputation of the chief alternative to vestries - the Corporation, then the Charity Trustees - had been damaged by the entangling of charity with party politics. Thus donors increasingly preferred the newer subscription charities.

[99] While the Webbs attributed the 'death of the parish' to the shift of power to Poor Law unions after 1834, Derek Fraser sees a continuing role in local party politics which only received '...a mortal wound with the abolition of church rates in 1868', *Urban Politics in Victorian England: the structure of politics in Victorian cities* (Leicester, 1976), ch.1, quote p.29.

Section 1

Conclusion

The theme of endowed charity has been largely overlooked by historians of modern philanthropy and this section aimed to rectify the omission with a systematic analysis of its operation at local level. The findings may now be summarized.

The Charity Commissions' reports showed a long-term decline in the practice of endowment, particularly with regard to small parish charities. This was only relative: large gifts were still made in the late nineteenth century, and the amount generated by accumulated past trusts increased impressively. [1] Nonetheless, in comparison to both the poor rates and the sums raised by subscription and donation to voluntary societies and institutions, this form of charity was becoming less important.

Two problems followed. Can we go beyond counterfactual assumption, that people now preferred other forms of benevolence, to suggest reasons why endowment fell out of favour ? Should historians accept at face value the arguments put by reformers of charities and municipal corporations that trust funds were subject to maladministration, and conclude that this was the cause of disenchantment ? The chronology of decline raised some immediate problems, in that it began before the association of charity management with 'Old Corruption' had fully entered public discourse, and reached a nadir just when reform was put in place. Indeed, from the mid-nineteenth century, government supervision, accountability, and the freedom from the hazards of property management which investment in securities had brought, made endowed charity thoroughly viable and secure. There was no straight causative link between corruption and decline.

Nonetheless, the argument about charity administration played a large part in the local politics of the Reform era, because it was such a potent metaphor for aspects of the *ancien regime* which were under assault from Radicals and Liberals. Three strands of interpretation were examined. The first, drawing on the sociology of modernization, took the reform rhetoric at face value, and assumed that the charity commission and the takeover by the Charity Trustees after 1835 represented a bona fide

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1 Though the decline in rental values of agricultural land after 1870 altered this trend, see F.W.E.Bowen *Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, Bristol* (Clevedon, 1971), p.100 for the effect on Bristol endowed schools.

attack on malversation. Thus the episode represented one aspect of the evolution of 'modern', 'rational' local government, brought about by a 'revision of sensibility'. [2] The second treated notions of reform and modernization with scepticism, and interpreted the discourse of corruption as a weapon employed by a counter-elite to garner public sympathy for its accession to power. [3] The third accepted the importance of functional determinants: urban growth, population pressure and recurrent economic stresses placed intensifying pressure on the parish, and led to its supersession by city-wide organisations and by central directives.

The evidence broadly favoured the second and third interpretations:

1. Although the new Charity Trustees successfully increased the income of endowments, we should avoid the characterisation of reforming modernizers sweeping aside the corrupt and non-rational. The motivation for reform was not the desire to improve the delivery of care to Bristol's poor. Improvement came about in large part because charity administration was a suitable weapon in party politics.

2. Despite the Radical/Liberal critique, there was no unequivocal evidence of widespread corruption and incompetence at parish level. The Corporation was certainly guilty of merging charity accounts with its own, but dubious practices were not confined to the late-eighteenth/early nineteenth century. Opposition publicity of malfeasance probably had no immediate effect. There were after all sufficient philanthropists who were loyal to the Corporation and to Anglicanism and prepared to ignore the attack, as the poor electoral showing of Radicals and Reformers demonstrates. [4] The really significant reduction of endowments followed, rather than preceded the reform of the trusts, making it likely that donors were increasingly deterred by the politicization of charity. The proposed solution, state supervision, had a negative effect.

3. The city tackled the challenges of health, environment and equitable distribution of the local tax burden through shifting power from the parish to larger bodies. This process coincided with the

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2 W.D.Rubinstein 'The End of "Old Corruption" in Britain 1780-1860' *Past and Present* 101, (1983) p.86.

3 For a critique of 'modernization' in social history, see Tony Judt 'A clown in regal purple: social history and the historian', *History Workshop* 7 (1979) pp.66-94.

4 The persistence of loyalism is a major theme in the work of Linda Colley, see *Britons, Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London,1992), and her 'Whose Nation? Class and National Consciousness in Britain, 1750-1830', *Past and Present* 113, (1986) pp.97-117; also J.C.D.Clark *English Society 1688-1832* (Cambridge, 1985).

decline in parochial endowments, as the benevolent observed the waning authority of the vestry in local government.

Section II

Mutuality

Introduction

Historical interest in mutualist associations has focused primarily on their role in the working class economy and on their ideological significance; only rarely are they discussed in the broader context of voluntarism and the relief of poverty. [1] Yet their contribution to social spending, principally through the friendly societies' provision of health and death insurance, was enormous. To offer a best estimate, the annual amount paid out to Bristol friendly society members in the event of sickness or death in the early 1870s was £ 19,776. [2] This may be compared with the £ 14,540 spent in 1870 on weekly relief by the Corporation of the Poor, or the £ 20,512 produced by those endowed charities devoted to the poor or elderly. [3] In addition to their economic importance, no study of nineteenth century voluntarism could justify the omission of mutuality. Friendly societies were a pervasive form of urban association and shared many features with middle class philanthropic groups, such as subscriber democracy, home-visiting, sociability and conviviality, and a common forebear - the urban gilds. There were also associations in which philanthropy and mutuality overlapped, with wealthy benefactors establishing annuitant societies, hierarchical friendly societies, savings banks and building societies.

The goal of this section is to trace and explain developments in these forms of voluntarism, and to assess the overall contribution of mutualist approaches to the problem of poverty in the city. Chapter 6 provides a survey of friendly societies in Bristol, using the provincial case-study to question standard accounts of their periodization, membership and appeal. In Chapter 7 the

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1 An exception is Roger Smith 'The Relief of Urban Poverty outside the Poor Law, 1800-1850: A Study of Nottingham', *Midland History* II, 1 (1973) pp.215-224; see also Lord Beveridge *Voluntary Action: A Report on Methods of Social Advance* (London, 1948) and Geoffrey Finlayson *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990* (Oxford, 1994) mentioned in Chapter 1.

2 See Appendix 3.

3 Poor relief: PP 1870 lviii, spending in the year ending Lady Day 1870. Endowed charities, PP. 1877 lxvi *General Digest of Endowed Charities in England and Wales*, Table II, 'Analytical Statement of the Several Objects of Foundation, or Purposes...'; the total consists of almshouses and pensions, doles of articles or money, 'general uses of the poor', and medical charities; friendly society spending exceeded private charity in Bradford at the same time, see Karl Ittmann *Work, Gender and Family in Victorian England* (London, 1995) pp.133, 279, note 192.

influence of mutuality in other types of philanthropic and quasi-philanthropic associations will be explored.

Chapter 6

Friendly Societies in 19th Century Bristol

'To a Good old Proverb listen pray, Provide a something for a rainy day
Age brings Infirmity, Accidents make lame, And sickness dire attacks the human frame,
But when disease confines us to our bed, Our union funds provide our Children in Bread
Should God be pleased to end our journey here,
With fostering hand we dry the Widow's tear,
Be united and persevere.' [1]

This verse, from the 1846 rulebook of the Royal Union Friendship Society, reminds us of the well-known functions of the 19th century benefit club, the provision of health and death insurance for the working man's family. It is perhaps the very uniformity and ubiquity of friendly societies, their ordinariness, that explains the relative lack of scholarly interest in them, despite the fact that as far as we know membership of such clubs far exceeded membership of trade unions. [2] One premise of this chapter is that the study of friendly societies does still have more to tell us of the outlook and aspirations of ordinary people, but to get at what these meanings might be entails moving beyond standard perspectives that link participation either to ideologies of class or alternatively to simple self-interest. After a brief historiographical review it will look critically at standard interpretations of growth and membership, while the latter half explores the meaning of club membership to individuals, and analyses the impact of the societies on medical provision and life insurance. My conclusions are based principally on a study of a sample of 316 friendly societies formed in Bristol between 1770 and 1870.

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1 PRO FS 1 555.

2 The figure of four million benefit club members to some one million trade unionists has been arrived at, using the Webbs' estimate for union numbers c.1870 and the findings of the *Royal Commission appointed to inquire into Friendly and Benefit Building Societies, 1871-4*; see also David Green *Working-Class Patients and the Medical Establishment, Self-help in Britain from the mid-nineteenth century to 1948* (Aldershot, 1985), p.93, who suggests 6 million society members against 870,000 trade unionists, though this is a wild guess based on a very generous estimate of the number of unregistered members.

a) Historiography

The standard conception of friendly societies (or benefit clubs) is as a form of 'self-help', in other words a means of personal insurance against ill-health or death over and above that provided by the state via poor law legislation. Seminal studies, particularly those of Gosden, established the functions of the clubs, with their monthly subscription to the box that provided health insurance for up to a year, a lying-in grant, death benefit and increasingly, medical attendance. [3] They also set out an accepted periodization of friendly society growth, which sees a 'take-off' at the end of the eighteenth century, building to a golden age in the mid-nineteenth, when, to quote the historian of National Insurance, Bentley Gilbert, the clubs were '..a typical manifestation of the Victorian ethic of providence and self-help'. [4] They also demonstrated that by the mid-19th century the 'local' friendly societies - small, independent and pub-based - had been displaced by the affiliated orders, which were national organisations with branch networks, like the Independent Order of Oddfellows, the Ancient Order of Foresters, the Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds and the United Ancient Order of Druids. Each had characteristic regalia and imagery, and each offered a wider range of facilities than local clubs. [5]

A second strand of analysis has concerned the relationship between friendly societies and the elite of the working class. E.P.Thompson stressed the importance of mutual traditions in the formation of working class consciousness, with various aspects of society rule-books, like those restricting drunkenness and bad language as evidence of a new artisan respectability. [6] The importance to the artisan of independence from poor law or charity featured in Prothero's work on the Thames shipwrights of the early nineteenth century. [7] Eric Hobsbawm tied benefit club membership to his formulation of the labour aristocracy, paving the way for Gray's study of Edinburgh and Crossick's work on Kentish London. [8] These both argued that the societies were

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3 P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England 1815-1875* (Manchester, 1961) and idem., *Self-Help, Voluntary Associations in the 19th Century* (London, 1973); Margaret D.Fuller *West Country Friendly Societies* (Reading, 1964).

4 Bentley B.Gilbert *The Evolution of National Insurance in Great Britain* (London, 1966) p.165.

5 P.H.J.H.Gosden *Self-Help* op. cit., ch.3.

6 E.P.Thompson *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1963) pp. 457-463.

7 I.Prothero *Artisans and Politics in Early Nineteenth Century London* (Chatham, 1979) pp.28-30.

8 Eric Hobsbawm *Labouring Men, Studies in the History of Labour* (London, 1964) pp.71, 278; for an early plea by Hobsbawm for more research on the topic, see his 'Friendly Societies' *The Amateur Historian* 3, 3 (1957) pp.95-101; Robert

indeed the preserve of the artisan alite, and manifested *their* particular values, of independence and respectability, though this version of self-help was generated from below, not handed down by the middle class. [9] More recently Paul Johnson's examination of saving habits post-1870 has placed collective thrift organisations in the context of stratification within class and community that went far beyond the labour aristocracy. [10] His verdict was this: 'Although the means adopted were sometimes mutual and collective, the goal was personal and competitive; self-help sometimes, self-interest always.' [11] In this reading the love of regalia and public ceremony lay in the opportunity it offered to distinguish oneself from those less well-off, in a competitive and status conscious society. [12]

The third strand concerns the broader impact of friendly societies and arises both from the discussion of their social make-up, and the debate over the political consensus that prevailed in mid-Victorian England. Here the members' aspirations of independence and respectability are seen as creating a non-revolutionary, ameliorative force. Barry Supple's essay 'Legislation and Virtue' traced the combination of paternalism and self-interest that motivated *statutory* provision for friendly societies and savings banks. [13] The picture was of a positive legislative response by central government to self-defined goals of thrift institutions, which were also in the national interest. Likewise John Foster included friendly societies amongst those institutions of social control through which the Oldham bourgeoisie asserted its hegemony, and Crossick's artisan elite, though not so 'embourgeiosified', was equally deferential and consensual in its status hunger. [14]

Q.Gray *The Labour Aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh* (Oxford, 1976) pp.121-7; Geoffrey Crossick *An Artisan Elite in Victorian Society* (London, 1978) pp.174-98.

9 This assumption also informs Simon Cordery's recent contribution 'Friendly Societies and the Discourse of Respectability in Britain, 1825-1875', *Journal of British Studies* 34, 1, (1995) pp.35-58.

10 Paul Johnson *Saving and Spending, The Working-class Economy in Britain 1870-1939* (Oxford, 1985), ch.3.

11 Ibid., p.232.

12 For Johnson's view of status differentiation as a process widely diffused through the working class, see idem., 'Conspicuous Consumption and Working-Class Culture in Late-Victorian Britain', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th. series 38, 1988 pp.27-42.

13 Barry Supple 'Legislation and Virtue: An Essay on Working Class Self-Help and the State in the Early Nineteenth Century' in N.McKendrick ed., *Historical Perspectives, Studies in English Thought and Society, in Honour of J.H.Plumb* (London, 1974).

14 John Foster *Class Struggle in the Industrial Revolution* (London, 1974) pp.216-8, see also p.341 for reference to government registration of friendly societies in 1793 as 'state control'; for friendly societies as bearers of 'consensus values', see Trygve R.Tholfsen *Working-Class Radicalism in Mid-Victorian England* (London, 1976) pp.288-305.

A series of recent studies have provided new perspectives and challenges to received wisdom. Julie O'Neill's work on Nottinghamshire friendly societies, 1724-1913, approaches the associations over a longer term than the usual nineteenth century focus. [15] David Neave's work on the clubs in Yorkshire and Dot Jones' on Glamorgan challenges received opinion on their social composition, and like O'Neill, Neave emphasizes their cultural distinctiveness rather than their contribution to consensus. [16] David Green and Hilary Marland detail the growing contribution of friendly societies to medical care, with the former providing an exceptionally optimistic interpretation. [17] The Bristol evidence is therefore offered in the context of an emerging revisionism.

b) The question of periodization

Gosden viewed friendly society growth as a function of the 'increased rate of industrial development in the second half of the eighteenth century', reflecting 'the needs of the growing number of industrial workers'. Evidence for this was the geographical distribution of friendly societies, with their Lancashire heartland, and the timing of a 'take-off' in formations after 1760 as revealed in records of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies. The chronology then coloured explanations of the motives of members which were seen as mobility, urbanization, the breakdown of community, loneliness, anomie, and the insecurity of wage labour, all of which hinged on sudden industrial change. [18] Bristol's experience points instead to a more gradual development of friendly societies, with key points being their early eighteenth century emergence, probably from the gilds, and the mid-nineteenth century success of the affiliated orders.

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15 Julie O'Neill 'A search for independence? Friendly Societies in Nottinghamshire 1724-1912' *Bulletin of Local History, East Midland Region* (1988); idem. 'Self-Help in Nottinghamshire: the Woodborough Male Friendly Society', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire* 90, (1986) pp.57-63.

16 David Neave *Mutual Aid in the Victorian Countryside: Friendly Societies in the Rural East Riding* 1830-1914 (Hull, 1991); Dot Jones 'Did Friendly Societies Matter ? A Study of Friendly Societies in Glamorgan, 1794-1910' *The Welsh History Review*, 324, (1985) pp.324-349.

17 David Green op. cit., is a critique of state medical care in which the friendly societies are admired as successful examples of market mechanisms; Hilary Marland *Medicine and society in Wakefield and Huddersfield, 1780-1870* (Cambridge, 1987); Neave op. cit., ch.5 also challenges the view that friendly society benefits were of negligible importance to the well-being of the working class.

18 P.H.J.H.Gosden *Friendly Societies* op. cit., pp.2, 23-4, 63; the numbers of eighteenth century foundations were drawn from the Chief Registrar's Report, 1883, pp.9-13.

Gosden's views were tentative, and he was well aware of the shortcomings of the figures. [19] Local registration of friendly societies dated from 1793, and began to be centralized from 1829, though it remained voluntary. The pattern of growth revealed in the Registrar's holdings may therefore represent nothing more than the vagaries of archival preservation, with a greater number of survivals in more recent decades. The next piece of evidence for the more rapid rate of growth at the turn of the century came from two parish Poor Law Returns, of 1803/4 and 1815. [20] The Bristol returns, *Table 6.1* (over), seem on the face of it to provide confirmation of the 'take-off', if we compare the city membership figures and those for the county as a whole between the two returns. How reliable are these figures ? Various features suggest possible problems such as the 6 parishes with no members in the first survey which make a return in the latter, while 2 parishes, St John and St Philip and Jacob record anomalous rates of growth. Could it be that 1815 is simply a more thorough return ? After all, vestries probably felt they had a greater incentive to accuracy, given that the Bristol Poor Rate had risen from £11,350 in 1804 to £ 16,000 in 1815. [21] Early nineteenth century take-off may therefore be overstated.

A second source, which again superficially appears to confirm the 'take-off' are the Registrar General's records of societies enrolled under the Friendly Societies Act of 1793, *Table 6.2* (p.145). Registration, as already noted, was not compulsory - it was offered to those who wished it as it conferred legal recognition, and hence greater protection of the funds, as well as various perks like the right to invest at a preferential interest rate with the Commissioners of the National Debt. Up until 1829 societies registered with the local clerk of the peace, and from 1846 with a central registry in London. [22]

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[19] P.H.J.H.Gosden *Friendly Societies* pp.2, 24.
[20] P.H.J.H.Gosden *Self-Help* op. cit., p.12; idem. *Friendly Societies* p.16, 21-24.
[21] See above, *Table 2.2*; the shortcomings of the 1815 return are noted by Gosden, *Friendly Societies* p.21-3..
[22] Barry Supple op. cit., pp.225-38, provides a thorough account of changing policy.

Table 6.1: Bristol Friendly Societies in the Early Nineteenth Century

	Parish	no. Societies *1803-4*	no. Members *1803-4*	*1815*
Bristol:	All Saints			111
	St Augustine			
	Castle Precints			78
	Christchurch			246
	St Ewen			
	St James	8 *(1)*	526 *(70)*	760
	St John	4	600	1,021
	St Leonard			
	St Mary-le-Port			143
	St Mary Redcliffe	3	205	419
	St Michael			86
	St Nicholas	1	20	216
	St Paul	7	560	698
	St Peter			182
	St Philip & Jacob (in)	7 *(2)*	449 *(143)*	568
	St Stephen	4 *(1)*	165 *(47)*	317
	Temple	24 *(6)*	1,572 *(542)*	900
Suburbs:	Clifton	1	57	60
	St George	13 *(3)*	579 *(89)*	720
	Mangotsfield	5	175	266
	St Philip & Jacob	4	200	808
	Stapleton	3 *(1)*	188 *(48)*	302
	Bedminster	4	259	313
Bristol area Total		88 *(14)*	5,555 *(939)*	8,214
Gloucestershire Total		263 *(20)*	19,606 *(1,313)*	26,066

Source: PP 1803-4, xiii pp.174-5, 188-91; PP 1818 xix, 156-7, 170-1. [23] *Figures in brackets denote the number of Female Societies and Members contained within the total.*

Looking at the returns of Bristol societies in *Table 6.2* (over), we can see the pattern of change from the Registrar's perspective, but we can also contrast the date of registration with the date of foundation, as revealed either in a subsequent return made in 1880, or by cross-checking with the surviving rule-books, held by the Registrar or in local quarter sessions. We already know there were

[23] 1803-4: *Abstract of answers and returns pursuant to: 'An Act for procuring Returns relative to the Expence and Maintenance of the Poor in England'*; 1818: *Abstract of the Answers and Returns made pursuant to 'An Act for procuring Returns relative to the Expence and Maintenance of the Poor in England; and also relative to the Highways; so far as relates to the Poor.'*

at least 88 clubs extant in 1803/4, and using that ratio of members to clubs, we can estimate the actual number of clubs in Bristol in 1815 to have been 130 - rather more than the 52 who have left some record of foundation, and even more in excess of the dozen that formally registered. In the 1830s the numbers of foundations and registrations draw closer, only to veer apart again between 1841 and 1860. A reasonable correspondence between foundation and registration only appears to obtain in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Table 6.2 Registered Bristol Friendly Societies, to 1870 [24]

Date	Total		Affiliated Orders				Female
	founded	*registered*	*founded*				*founded*
			O	*F*	*S*	*D*	
pre-1770	1						
1771-80	2						
1781-90	4						
1791-95	12	6					2
1796-1800	9	4					1
1801-05	11						2
1806-10	7	1					1
1811-15	6	1					
1816-20	11						
1821-25	4	1					
1826-30	3	2					
1831-35	5	7					1
1836-40	29	28	4				2
1841-45	45	28	12	16			2
1846-50	6	5		2			
1851-55	18	41	3	7	1		2
1856-60	32	22	4	12	3		1
1861-65	68	60	1	25	27	3	1
1866-70	45	47	1	4	24	7	4

O = Oddfellows, F = Foresters, S = Shepherds, D = Druids.

Source: PRO FS 1&2, Gloucestershire; Bristol Record Office Quarter Sessions Papers: Friendly Societies; PP 1880 lxviii *Abstract of the Quinquennial Returns of Sickness and Mortality experienced by Friendly Societies for the Periods between 1855 and 1875* pp.685-703.

[24] Of the total up to 1850, 5 were annuitant societies (see below, Chapter 7c)), 6 dividing societies, which shared the funds annually then began again, and 5 temperance clubs; by the 1870s there were 8 dividing clubs (c.1250 members), and 7 burial clubs (c.530 members), see PP 1874 xxiii pt.2, *Friendly Societies Commission: - Appendix to Sir G.Young's Report* pp.51-2. Young was the commissioner who visited Bristol for the parliamentary investigation conducted in the early 1870s; hereafter the report, and the section of the Appendix dealing with Bristol and its suburbs is cited as 'Young', and page references are the original pagination, not that of the Parliamentary Papers.

There is therefore considerable danger in taking these figures at face value, for example in arguing, as did the Registrar General at the time, and Gosden, more hesitantly, that the Poor Law Amendment Act led to a marked increase in formations. [25] All that the registration figures really show, at least till the latter part of the nineteenth century, is the attitude of societies towards registration, and this was determined not simply by a weighing of the benefits of registration, but also by considerations of the costs of coming under the supervision of the local magistracy or of central government. [26] As for the growth of the affiliated orders themselves their expansion in the 1840s was not picked up in registrations until the early 1850s, following legislation which lifted their fear of prosecution under earlier acts. Even then not all branches chose to register, nor should we assume that the surge in the number of societies in the mid-century necessarily demonstrates that the affiliated orders enticed new people into the friendly society movement. It is equally possible that extant societies converted themselves into branches of the affiliated orders.

The few societies which can be positively identified as having a female membership are also listed here, and their pattern of registration also shows an intial enthusiasm post-1793, followed by a lull, then more formations from the 1830s. It is interesting to note that the persistence of female registrations in the mid-century contradicts Dorothy Thompson's view that they were more a feature of the earlier period, although it is certainly the case that the affiliated orders, which took off in the city from the 1840s, were predominantly male organisations. [27] One response of Bristol women to the emergence of the exclusive Odd Fellows was to start their own, non-affiliated order, the 'Odd-Sisters', and there were also 6 sanctuaries of 'Shepherdesses' operating in 1870, only one of which was registered; 3 were affiliated to the Ashton Unity, the central body of Shepherds, and three formed the breakaway Bristol Unity. It was not until the end of the century that the other orders opened up to women, with the Foresters, for example, admitting female courts in 1892, and mixed courts from 1899. [28]

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[25] P.H.J.H.Gosden *Friendly Societies* op. cit., pp.207-9.
[26] Barry Supple op. cit., pp.227, 236; I.Prothero ch.12.
[27] Dorothy Thompson 'Women and Radical Politics: A Lost Dimension', Juliet Mitchell and Ann Oakley ed. *The Rights and Wrongs of Women* (London, 1976), pp.117, 137; see also Dot Jones op. cit., p.333.
[28] *Foresters' Directory* (1893) pp.lxi-lxii; Walter G.Cooper *The Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society, 150 Years, 1834-1984* (Southampton, 1984) pp.19, 22.

A final source to bring into play is the report by Sir George Young appended to the Northcote Commission of Enquiry into Friendly Societies conducted between 1870and 1874. [29] Young's notes on Bristol include an enumeration of societies and members, both registered and non-registered, which can usefully be compared with the earlier returns of 1803 and 1815 (*Table 6.3* over). What is striking here is the consistency, first of all of members as a percentage of total urban population, and secondly as a percentage of families. Bearing in mind my argument that the 1803 figures probably understate the membership, it seems that, in contrast to the uneven picture presented by the registrations, friendly society expansion was in line with the growth in population, with coverage extending to somewhere in the region of 40% of families. [30]

Table 6.3. The scale of Friendly Society membership in 19th. century Bristol.

	members	population	families	members as % of population	members as % of families
1803	5,555	69,741	15,790	8.0	35.2
1815	8,214	86,910	19,678	9.5	41.7
1871	16,339	182,552	41,959	9.0	38.9

Source: PP 1803-4, xiii pp.174-5, 188-91; PP 1818 xix, 156-7, 170-1; PP 1874 xxiii, pp.471-2. [31]

To summarize, while the Bristol evidence confirms the shift in the mid-nineteenth century when the affiliated orders superseded the local friendly societies, there is no clear confirmation of a putative surge in growth in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century. [32] Gosden was clearly correct to highlight the faster rate of growth in areas experiencing heavy industrialisation, but his emphasis on this aspect of change obscured the more gradual evolution experienced elsewhere, and

29 Young p.63.

30 The percentage is probably exaggerated given the possibility of multiple membership, although this practice was frowned upon since it heightened the risk of default in the event of unemploment. Young deliberately avoided double-counting those Foresters who had purchased additional insurance by joining a Sanctuary of the Ancient Order of Shepherds.

31 Population/families: calculated from census enumerator's tables, 1801, 1811, 1821, 1871; I thank Bernard Harris for his advice on the ordering of this data.

32 P.H.J.H.Gosden *Self-Help* op. cit.,pp.27-30, ch.3.

thus down-played the possible significance of an earlier phase of development when benefit clubs first emerged. It is to that phase that we now turn.

c) The origin of friendly societies

Modern historians have preferred to see the friendly society as essentially a late eighteenth century development, because this is the point at which they become visible in central government statistics. However, Victorian commentators were convinced that their ancestry lay with the gilds. [33] If we take the claim of gild origins seriously and begin to look for correspondences between the two types of institutions, the similarities *are* quite striking. It might seem preposterous to begin by drawing parallels with the religious gilds, which were dissolved in the 1540s, but the late medieval Bristol gild of Kalendars followed a recognisable pattern in visiting sick members and in paying them alms for up to twelve months, from a common chest. [34] Also, as in the benefit clubs, great store was set on the attendance of gild members at a deceased brother's funeral, where, just like in the societies, a levy from each member was made.

Records of craft gilds and the articles they lodged with the Corporation of Bristol between about 1460 and 1660 provide evidence of a host of administrative practices that exactly foreshadow those in the friendly society rulebooks. For example, home-visiting was a routine used to ensure observation of gild ordinances, just as friendly society stewards visited members' homes. [35] The practice of fining to enforce meeting decorum, attendance and the duties of office were common to both types of association. [36] Participation in the election of officials was another feature, with gilds

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[33] J.M.Ludlow *The Contemporary Review* (April 1873), p.748; John Frome Wilkinson *The Friendly Society Movement* (London, 1886) p.3; see also Francis Aidan Hibbert *The Influence and Development of English Gilds* (1891) edn. New York 1970 p.50: 'In their character as Benefit Clubs they (gilds) taught their members to be thrifty..'.

[34] F.Bickley ed.*The Little Red Book of Bristol* (Bristol, 1900), hereafter *LRB* vol I pp.xxvi-vii; Barret *History of Bristol* p.453; Nicholas Orme The Guild of Kalendars, Bristol' *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society.* xcvi (1978) pp.32-52, esp. p.36; on parish fraternities, H.F.Westlake *The Parish Gilds of Mediaeval England* (London, 1919) ch.IV and pp.42-4; see also Clive Burgess '"A fond thing vainly invented": an essay on Purgatory and pious motive in later medieval England.' in ed. S.J.Wright op. cit., p.67; N.P.Tanner *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich* (Toronto, 1984) pp.67-82, 91-110; J.Scarisbrick *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford,1984) ch.2.

[35] F.H.Rogers 'The Bristol Craft Gilds during the 16th and 17th Centuries' (University of Bristol M.A. thesis 1949), p.104.

[36] Gilds: E.W.W.Veale ed. *The Great Red Book of Bristol* (hereafter *GRB)* part I (Bristol, 1933), part III (Bristol 1951), 1951), I, p.74-5, Goldsmiths, 2 Ed IV, p.118 Whitawers, I p.161, Sheremen, I p.151, Bowyers and Flecchers, p.161, Sheremen; Friendly Societies:BRO FS 10, Bristol Society of All Trades, members refusing office as Stewards, fined 2s, as Visitors, 1s; BRO FS 11, Provident Annuitant Society, members fined £1 for refusal of office; BRO FS 12, Hibernian Benefit Society fine for refusal 2s 6d; BRO FS 30a, Friendly Union Society, stewards fined 1s if late with payments; BRO FS 12 for unequal beer distribution; BRO FS 30a, PRO FS 581, Friendly Union Society for failure to pay for annual feast;see also Margaret D.Fuller op. cit., pp.51-2.

choosing their officials at an annual meeting with an open vote, and the societies selecting members as Stewards in rotation from and balloting for President from nominees. [37] The use of a box with multiple locks and keys held by separate officials was another similarity, the gilds distributing them among their elders, and the friendly societies between the stewards and the landlord of the pub in which the club met. [38] The importance of members receiving a decent funeral was central to both: gilds levied fines for non-attendance as did the societies, some of whom also specified 'a clean shirt' and 'solemnity'. [39] Likewise great store was set on conviviality, especially the annual feast, with the gilds celebrating patron saints' days and civic ceremonies, and the benefit clubs diverting a fixed monthly sum for their beer on club night and enjoying an annual feast day, often on or around Whitsun. [40] Finally, both had formal procedures of mutual aid, which for some gilds could extend to running their own almshouses, and operating schemes to maintain the families of bankrupt members. [41]

Now, it may be argued that we are looking simply at cultural continuities - forms that were copied because they were familiar. The Bristol evidence points instead to a more a direct tradition. Firstly, recent work on gilds in the eighteenth century has modified the standard view of their gradual decline dating from the Restoration. [42] M.J.Walker's survey of craft gilds in Bristol, Newcastle, Coventry and York actually points to a revival of gild economic controls in the early

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37 Gilds: *GRB* I p.150 Bowyers and Flecchers, p.160, Sheremen, 1 Ed. IV; F.H.Rogers op. cit., p.111; friendly societies: see eg. BRO FS 2, 8, 10, 18a, 24a.

38 BRO 04369(1) Joiners etc (1606) no.9, p.86; F.H.Rogers op. cit., p.90; for the Goldsmiths' 'Comyn Boxe' see *GRB* III p.74.

39 Gild fines for absences were levied by the Smiths, Cutlers, Gunners, Girdlers, Sheargrinders, and Linendrapers (6d), the Saddlers and Fuysters (4d) and the Merchant Tailors, see F.F.Fox *Some Account of the Merchant Taylors of Bristol* (Bristol, 1880), p.54; F.H.Rogers op. cit., pp.110-111, the dates of the ordinances were, Smiths etc 1607, Saddlers and Fuysters 1578; societies: BRO FS 18a, Young Union Society of Cordwainers; see also BRO FS 30a Friendly Union Society.

40 *GRB* III p.75, p.116, I pp. 26-7, 153, 160; PRO FS 592, Easter Monday, PRO FS 596, Wednesday in Whitsun week, PRO FS 640, 25th. October, PRO FS 581, first Wednesday after 16th. October; see also Alun Howkins 'The Taming of Whitsun in nineteenth century Oxfordshire', Eileen and Stephen Yeo ed. *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914: Explorations in the history of labour and leisure* (London, 1981); idem., *Whitsun in 19th. century Oxfordshire* (Oxford, 1973), Ruskin College History Workshop Pamphlets, No. 8.

41 F.F.Fox and J.Taylor *Some Account of the Weavers in Bristol* (Bristol, 1889) pp.56-8, 90-1, *LRB* vol I pp.xxvii-iii, II pp.186-92; Barret op. cit., p.180; in the Fraternity of Mariners (founded 1445) all seamen contributed regular payments towards the upkeep of an almshouse which housed 12 retired mariners and a priest - for the revival of similar schemes in the 18th century, at first based at the Royal Hospital, Greenwich, see Jon Press 'The Collapse of a Contributory Pension Scheme: The Merchant Seamen's Fund' in *The Journal of Transport History* 2nd. series, v, 1 (1979) pp.91-104; just as the later friendly societies would not extend their benefits to those whose misfortune had been self-induced through 'fighting, jumping, wrestling or venereal complaints', so the Merchant Tailors' scheme excluded those members guilty of being: 'nyghte walker hore master glotton common quarreler a fyghter or gyven to anye other sutche naughtye vyces wherebye he is broughte to such povertye', see F.F.Fox *Some Account of the Merchant Taylors*, cited in F.H.Rogers op. cit., p.110; BRO FS 10, Article 11 of the Bristol Society of All Trades.

42 M.J.Walker 'The extent of guild control of trades in England, c.1660-1820' Cambridge University Ph.D (1986).

eighteenth century, with irreversible decline only from the mid-century. This work also shows the persistence of the gild funeral tradition, charities and poor relief, processions and feasting, and fines for verbal abuse throughout the eighteenth century, and its new evidence of the certificate system employed by journeymen on the tramp suggests the origins of the travelling pay, cards and clearances of the affiliated orders. [43] Walker concludes: 'When journeymen formed combinations or friendly societies, it was with the example of their journeymen's guild and the weight of guild heritage behind them'. [44] Friendly society activity was certainly underway in the early eighteenth century - Daniel Defoe's 1697 *Essay upon Several Projects* yields the first literary evidence of the benefit club, while the earliest recorded Bristol society, the Friendly Union Society, started in 1717. [45] Jonathan Barry's work on the social life of Bristol in the eighteenth century has turned up a host of examples of trades' benefit clubs, such as the Society of Masters of Ships (1748) the Mates Club (1749), and the Plush-Weavers Friendly Society (1752). [46] At around the same time references appear to benefit clubs with a broader occupational membership, such as the Helpful Society (1751), the Useful Society (1754), and the Society for the Benefit of Widows (1765). [47] The chronology is suggestive both of the evolution of trades' friendly societies from journeymen's gilds, as proposed by Walker, and of the emergence of new organisations which offered a rival form of sociability and security to that of the gilds.

Secondly it is also interesting to look at the similarities between these new clubs and the most well-known gild mutation, Freemasonry. [48] It was from the Masonic tradition that the ritual,

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[43] Ibid., pp.62-3, 102, 332, 361, 326-8, 332-5; Young pp.53, 59; PRO FS1 681; P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England* op. cit., pp.76-78, Appendix A; the remarkable national uniformity of friendly society rules long before widespread registration may well be explained by the diffusion of typical gild practices by tramping journeymen, for whom see Eric Hobsbawm 'The Tramping Artisan' in *Labouring Men* op. cit., ch.4, and R.A.Leeson *Travelling Brothers* (London, 1979), esp. ch.16.

[44] M.J.Walker op.cit., p.389, and see p.345; also R.A.Leeson op. cit., pp.77-8.

[45] Daniel Defoe *Essays on Projects* (1697) see Introduction and pp.21-5, collected in *The Works of Daniel Defoe* (London, 1843); BRO FS30a; the existence of an ultra-royalist militia, the Friendly Society of the Exercisers of Arms, in 1679, points to the generic nature of the term; seeBRO 8029/11; see also M. de L. Landon 'The Bristol Artillery Company and the Tory Triumph in Bristol 1679-84', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 114, (1970), pp.115-61; John Latimer *Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century* pp.383, and 406-9.

[46] *Bristol Oracle* 30/4/1748; *Oracle and Country Advertiser* 11/3/1749; *FFBJ* 11/11/1752. I am most grateful to Jonathan Barry for supplying these references, and those cited in footnotes 45, 47 & 49.

[47] BRL 20095 William Dyer's diary, 6/11/1751, and passim., William Davies *Sermons on Religious and Moral Subjects* (Bristol, 1754) includes a sermon preached before the Useful Society, no. 9, p.159; *Bristol Journal* 4/5/1765.

[48] For the transition from 'operative' to 'speculative' Masonry, ie. from craft gild to club, and the development of its rites and ceremonies, see D.Knoop and G.Jones *Introduction to Freemasonry* (Manchester, 1937) pp.56-70; for Bristol freemasonry, Arthur Powell & Joseph Littleton *A History of Freemasonry in Bristol* (Bristol, 1910); more generally, J.Brewer 'Commercialisation and Politics' in N.McKendrick, J.Brewer, and J.H.Plumb *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (London,

regalia, secrets and initiation was adapted. One Masonic lodge in Bristol - the Temple Lodge Benefit Society, even doubled as a friendly society. [49] Elsewhere there were even more significant links, with the first Foresters' Court founded, in Leeds in 1790 by members of a local Masonic Lodge. [50] And, while the Masons were to remain one of the few middle class associations in the nineteenth century which did not discriminate according to party or religion, it was a common boast of the friendly society that it was open to all, regardless of creed, politics or even race - though not, of course, gender. [51]

A return to the emphasis on the gild origins of friendly societies has two main implications. The first is that our understanding of society membership needs to be formed not simply from the perspective of the values they appear to represent, be these class ideology, individual social and economic goals, or more generalised cultural expression. [52] We also need to recognise the power of customary survivals over a long run. So for example, we may comprehend friendly society funerary decorum in terms of early nineteenth century horror at the idea of a pauper death. [53] But we also need to recognise that group solidarity around a member's death had long been an important facet of urban association.

Likewise the integrative and consensual aspects of the societies' public face, listening with approval to well-to-do patron, or processing in civic ceremonies (see *Fig.6.1*,over), also needs to be seen in terms of gild traditions. [54] More generally, we might wish to present the participatory and mutualist aspects of the 19th century friendly society as emblematic of working class collectivism and democratic ideals, but we also need to remember that it emanated from a gild tradition in which

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1982) ch.5; L.Davidoff and C.Hall *Family Fortunes, Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London, 1987) pp.208, 425-7, stress not only the social connections but the gendered nature of masonry.

49 BRL 7952 fo.7, Jeffries collection.

50 Walter G.Cooper op. cit., p.2.

51 Though see John Money 'Freemasonry and the Fabric of Loyalism in Hanoverian England' in Eckhart Hellmuth ed. *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990) for discussion of political connotations of masonry.

52 viz Tholfson op. cit. p.288: 'They were deeply imbued with the soft and sentimental spirit of mid-Victorianism'.

53 Ruth Richardson *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* (London, 1988).

54 The best illustration of this is the gradual supersession of craft gilds by friendly societies in the decennial procession of the Preston Gild Merchant, see William Dobson and John Harland *A History of Preston Guild* (Preston, 1862) pp.54-71, and see the discussion in Patrick Joyce *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the question of class, 1848-1914* (Cambridge, 1991) pp.183-5; for the desire for middle-class patronage, see Tholfson op. cit., pp.300, and for a more sceptical view, David Neave op. cit., ch.6.

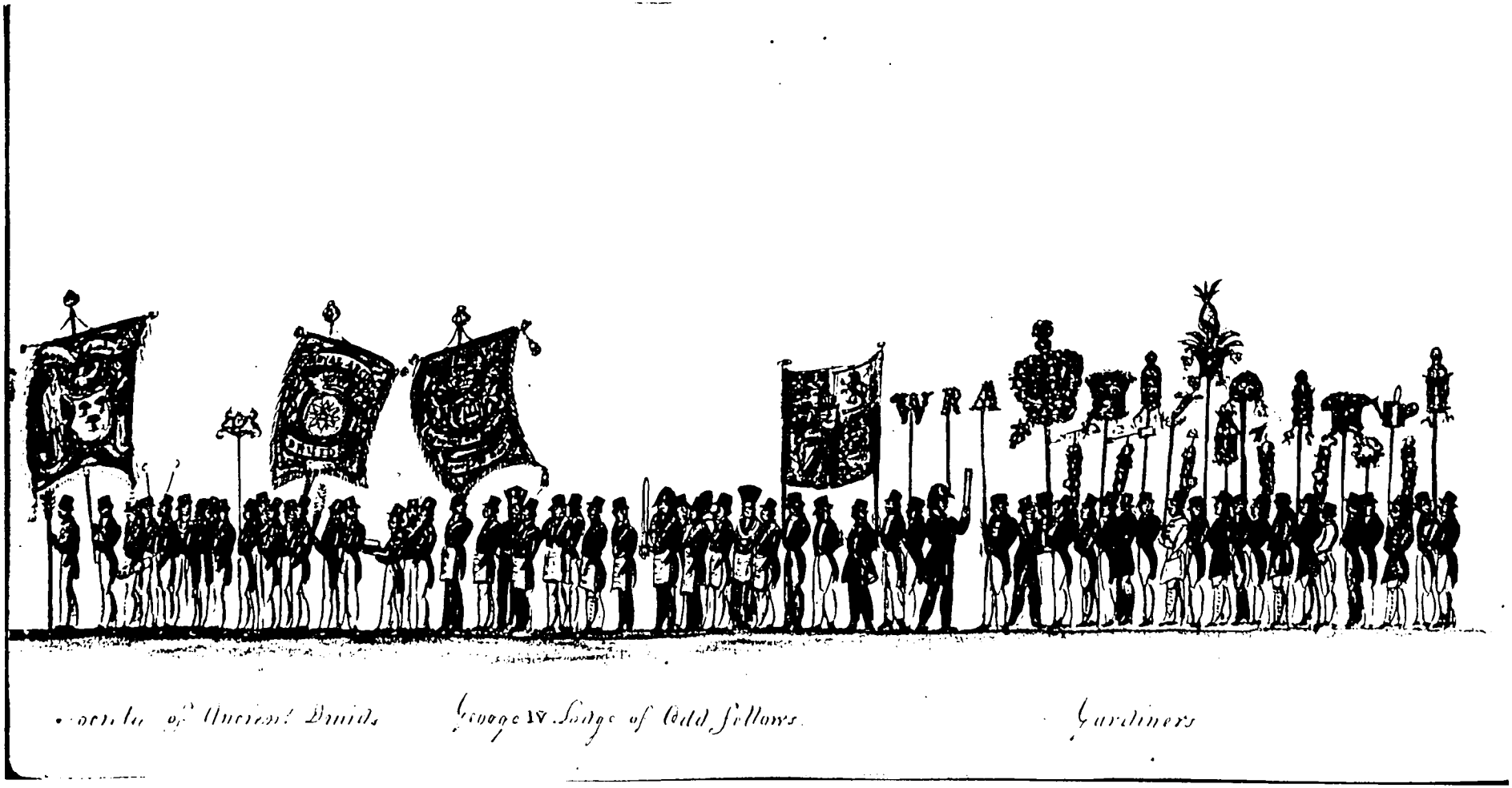

Fig. 6.1 Detail from Robert Greethead's *The Procession in Bristol celebrating the Coronation of William IV and Queen Adelaide* (1831), courtesy of Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery; the societies appear behind the Corporation and vestry officials, but before the trades. Note that neither Oddfellows nor Druids were centrally registered in 1831 (see *Table 6.2*), despite being an accepted part of the urban landscape.

participation combined with an acute awareness of hierarchy, both within the trade, and in the relationship between the trade and the town Corporation. [55]

d) The social constituency of the members

Turning now to the other widely accepted conception of the friendly society, that it was the preserve of the skilled worker, what does this case-study reveal of occupation, earning level and status ? The argument will be that a rigid equation of a putative artisan elite with the core of friendly society activists is not necessary, and hence the equation of friendly society ideology with that of the skilled worker might hinder more than it helps.

First, the Bristol evidence on the importance of workplace relationships is in line with the findings of other investigators, that is that while different branches contained clusters of people sharing the same occupation it is rare to find single trade societies. [56] If specific occupational links were not the key factor, what was the importance of the skilled worker ? Given the consistent proportions of friendly society membership between 1803 and 1870 there seems to be strong case for some sort of social unity, though the coverage of 40% of families is surely rather too large to identify solely with an artisan elite. [57] The Bristol evidence points instead to the conclusion that a range of societies existed catering to different income and status levels.

Clearly there were upper and lower limits here, but one way of identifying the interim band who did subscribe to friendly societies is through minimum wage requirements written in to surviving rule books, and *Table 6.4* (over) sets out the findings based on those clubs formed up to 1857. The most popular wage requirements were found consistently over a long duration: 12s, 1802-44, and 14s, 1792-1843. With due caution then, the 12s-14s cut-off point can be taken as typical in the early Victorian period, but one important proviso must be added. The table is based only on *registered*

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55 Antony Black *Gilds and Civil Society* (London, 1984) for the tradition of civic associationalism, and see ch.14, & p.174.

56 There were 21 out of the whole sample: of these some had evolved from box club to trade union, eg.The Carpenters' Friendly Union and the New Rock Shipwrights' Benefit Society, Young pp.19, 62; others were run by the management, such as the Easton Colliery pit club and the Bristol and Exeter Railway Labourers' Annual Benefit Club, ibid., pp.20, 63, 65; it seems trade unionists preferred their friendly society membership to be a separate economic arrangement, in case of 'any great disaster to the trade', ibid., p.62.

57 At least as formulated by Hobsbawm at c.15%, *Labouring Men* op. cit., p.278, though it does correspond more closely to the more generous definition of skilled worker used by Andrew Miles in his work on social mobility, 'How open was nineteenth century British society? Social mobility and equality of opportunity, 1839-1914' in Andrew Miles and David Vincent ed. *Building European Society, Occupational change and social mobility in Europe 1840-1940* (Manchester, 1993) p.24; again the possibility of multiple membership must be borne in mind, see note 30 above.

societies, and it is possible that unregistered clubs, which, it will be recalled, were still the majority in 1815, and perhaps long after, had a lower minimum wage threshold than the others, or none at all.

Table 6.4 Minimum wage requirements of Bristol Friendly Societies formed 1777-1857

Wage:	No. societies:
9s	1
10s	1
12s	8
14s	8
15s	3
16s	3
18s	2
20s	1
21s	1
25s	1

Source: PRO FS 1 Gloucestershire; BRO Quarter Sessions Papers

What can this level of minimum wage reveal of class and status ? Reliable wage data for this period is hard to come by, and harder to check. The Poor Law Commissioners of 1834 stated that the 'ordinary rate of wages in the city' was between 10s and 12s. In 1858 Bedminster miners earned on average 13s-14s a week. Carpenters were earning 18s to 20s in 1850-54. At the apex of skilled crafts, the shipwrights earned 24s - 30s a week in 1826. [58] It is therefore possible to say with some confidence that the minimum wage requirement was pitched *markedly below* the skilled worker's threshold, and that the semi-skilled or unskilled worker who was able to find stable employment might also contemplate society membership, family budget permitting. Consistency of income was the key factor, not wage level.

[58] For these and other local wage levels, Frederick Morton Eden *The State of the Poor* (1797) edn. London (1928) p.189; PP 1834 xxviii p.512A; *Bristol Gazette* 26/6/1806; *Bristol Mercury* 6/11/1826, 17/7/1858; A.L.Bowley 'The Statistics of Wages in the United Kingdom during the last Hundred Years (Part VI) Wages in the Building Trades.- English Towns', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* lxiii, (June, 1900) pp.297-315, p.306, '(Part X) Engineering and Shipbuilding', ibid., lxviii (March, 1905) pp.104-137, p.122.

The Bristol evidence of the 1874 Northcote Commission also undermines the conception of friendly societies as the sole preserve of the skilled worker. The responses from the various secretaries and members that George Young interviewed point to a clear awareness of status differentiation. The Odd Fellows were of 'a rather higher class', which according to a secretary of the Shepherds, limited their appeal: '..the O.F. don't want the working class. They are a cut above us; they don't seem anxious to extend in these parts.' By contrast the Shepherds presented themselves as popular and inclusive, deliberately pitching their appeal to labourers. [59]

Table 6.5 confirms this view of stratification from one of the few surviving indicators of membership: a Shepherds' death benefit book from the late-Victorian period, which shows the order did indeed consist of a large proportion of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. In addition it pesents the 1839 membership of a club from a rural suburb of Bristol, Westbury-on-Trym, where the craftsmen are once again outnumbered, this time by farm labourers.

Table 6.5. Occupations of Bristol Members of Shepherds Friendly Society, 1858-1899, and Westbury Junior Benefit Society, founder members, 1839.

occupation	*Shepherds*		*Westbury Junior*	
	total	*%*	*total*	*%*
White Collar	28	*4.5*		
Tradesmen	42	*6.5*		
Skilled	169	*27*	17	*26*
Semi-skilled	197	*31*	7	*11*
Unskilled	196	*31*	41	*63*
Total	632	*100*	65	*100*

Source: Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds A.U. *Register of Deaths1894-1899*, S.R.Woods *Westbury-on-Trym* vol.5 'Friendly Societies' (1975) Appendix.

This suggests that the social constituency of friendly society membership simply reflected the occupational structure of the locality, always remembering that the prime determinant was regularity

[59] Young pp.52, 54, 63., see also pp.55, 57, 59 and pp.60-63.

of earnings. [60] Obviously the better off workers made up the bulk of the friendly society membership since failure to meet regular payments risked the loss of the entire investment. [61] However the Bristol evidence does prompt a more critical look at the notion that the ideology of friendly societies can be understood as identical to the ideology of the skilled artisans, with their familiar aspirations of independence and respectability.

e) The Meanings of Mutuality

In the following chapter I will look in more detail at the emergence of new forms of saving which rivalled the friendly society in the period, ranging from commercial assurance, to savings banks, to quasi-philanthropic endeavours where mutual insurance was underwritten by the subscriptions of wealthy patrons. A notable feature of the benefit clubs is that they held their own against such competing institutions, despite the greater financial security and other attractions which the latter offered. This suggests that the independence and the social significance of club life weighed more heavily with them than the strictly economic advantage they might otherwise have gained. [62] But why ? Why too, in the mid-century, when the new savings options that were emerging were more rational, more bureaucratic and less risky, were friendly societies going in the opposite direction with the spread of the affiliated orders, which placed so much more emphasis on ritual, on regalia, on secrets, and on drama ?

This jealousy with which club members guarded their autonomy has been noted by other historians who have explained it essentially as a class characteristic of the skilled worker, anxious to assert his independence from the state and the local rate-payers, and for whom of the social 'extras' which the orders offered, met his need to proclaim, to those below him, his rung on the status ladder. [63] This may seem a reasonable way of reading their public events, but most friendly society activity was private, and obsessively so. Also it takes no account of continuities in friendly society

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[60] This is in line with Neave's findings: '...in the rural East Riding at least, a large proportion of labourers did belong to a friendly society...', op. cit., p.72; see also David G.Green op. cit., pp.93-102, and Dot Jones op. cit., pp.336-9.

[61] 'Investment' means here the death benefit and the completion of the initial phase of membership, usually twelve months, which preceded eligibility to benefits; in practice some leeway was given for defaulters to make good their subscriptions, though this could become a cause of friction, see PRO FS 319, and *Bristol Gazette* 10/11/1836 for examples of disputes.

[62] See below, Chapter 7 b).

[63] P.Johnson op. cit., p.226,and see Crossick op. cit., p.193.

history, and ties membership firmly to a particular stratum of the working class, which is then presumed to embody certain characteristics. Here some alternative suggestions will be offered for the appeal of mutualist association, and these will be related to the revised periodisation offered earlier, by identifying further elements of continuity as well as aspects which were peculiar to the early nineteenth century.

First, a brief diversion away from Bristol to the village of Marlott, in Thomas Hardy's fictional Wessex, where Angel Clare first sets eyes on Tess of the D'Urbevilles as she parades in her local friendly society, dressed in white, holding a peeled willow wand, 'in a processional march of two and two round the parish'. [64] Hardy uses the march as a metaphor for pagan survivals:

> 'The forests have departed, but some old customs of their shades remain. Many ... linger only in a metamorphosed or disguised form. The May-Day dance, for instance, was to be discerned on the afternoon under notice, in the guise of the club revel, or 'club-walking', as it was there called.'

Staying with rural clubs, here is a non-fictional report from 1858 of the Alveston May Benefit Society just north of Bristol which:

> '..proceeded, with flags and banners, headed by the Tockington band, to the parish church...afterwards they made calls at the principal gentry of the neighbourhood ... and the weather being excessively warm, they were enabled to imbibe a tolerable quantity of the "liberal doctor's" heavy wet. Thence they adjourned to their hostelry..'.[65]

Historians of nineteenth century rural custom have long known that friendly society Whitsun celebrations were attenuated versions of much older festivals. [66] Tess's willow wand is a reminder of May-Day garlands, while the route of the walk is reminiscent of the beating of parish bounds, originally a Rogation Week custom which annually re-asserted land-use rights. The Alveston club's visits to the local gentry to receive alcoholic largess recall the traditions of the Whitsun Ale, Plough

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64 Thomas Hardy *Tess of the D'Urbevilles* (1891) ch.2; see also Bob Bushaway *By Rite: Custom, Ceremony and Community in England 1700-1880* (London, 1982) pp.260-4.

65 *Bristol Mercury* 5/6/1858: 'heavy wet' was strong ale.

66 Bob Bushaway op. cit., passim., and see the essays by Howkins, note 40 above.

Monday and indeed the use of ale as a harvest perquisite. [67] Several themes come together here: the persistence of a popular festive calendar distinct from that of the church, the parish perambulation as the legitimation of working peoples' rights, and the use of custom to represent social cohesion of the small community.

Transposing these ideas to the urban setting suggests first that one appeal of the benefit club was its role as a focus of community, and as a means of marking the individual's place within it. One very obvious fact about friendly societies is that, until the last quarter of the century, when the orders' own halls were established, they were based in pub meeting rooms. Of the Bristol clubs formed up to 1859, 4 met in schoolrooms, 5 in vestries, 4 in houses, 3 in public rooms, and 148 in pubs. [68] It is therefore only a short step to consider the overlap between a man's attendance at a pub as his local drinking venue, and his membership of the pub benefit club. Both satisfied the need to register one's place in a local community, which though dependent on work, was essentially about residence. [69] This was particularly the case in villages and suburbs where the local pub really was the only local space in which the society could function, and the collection of society brass pole-heads in Reading Museum of English Rural Life carries many examples (*Figure 6.2*). [70] In the town centre the situation was more complex. There were various pubs which hosted more than 1 club, such as the Full Moon Inn with 9; nor were urban societies always loyal to one pub. [71] A sample of 20 branches of Odd Fellows and Foresters between 1860 and 1875 shows only 2 remaining in the same pub - 11 changed once and 7 twice. [72] Club membership in Bristol then,

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67 Bob Bushaway op. cit. pp.44, 118-25, 170, 189, 262.

68 PRO FS 2; BRO Quarter Sessions Papers.

69 For a defence of the vitality of neighbourhood and community, and the role of the inn within it, see Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly 'Neighbourhood Social Change in West European Cities, Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries' *International Review of Social History* 38 (1993) pp.1-30, esp.p.17.

70 Catalogued in Margaret Fuller op. cit., nos.: 164 (a), The Full Moon, 165 (b), The Star, both in Fishponds; 249 (c), The Bell in Stapleton; 148 (d), Redland Union Benefit Society, Black Boy Inn; 149 (e), Salutation Inn, Mangotsfield; 112 (f) and 225 (g) both from Filton; 113 (h) The Crown and Horseshoe Inn, Hanham; 245 (i) The Masons Inn, Stapleton; most West of England pole heads were produced in Bristol brass-works, see pp.119-20.

71 PRO FS 2; BRO Quarter Sessions Papers; other popular venues were The Cock and Bottle (7), The Crown and Dove (5), The Plume of Feathers (5) and The Star Inn (5). This was not simply a matter of change over a long period, with one society failing and another taking its place: of the nine clubs based at the Full Moon Inn, all registered between 1837 and 1852.

72 PP 1880 lxviii *Abstract of the Quinquennial Returns of Sickness and Mortality experienced by Friendly Societies for the Periods between 1855 and 1875*; registration numbers of the sample are 465, 605-6, 608-9, 612, 614, 618, 621-4, 628, 632-7, 671.

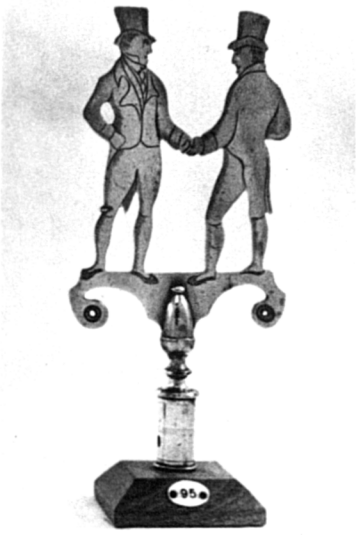
Figure 6.2 Friendly Society brass pole heads from Bristol Suburbs

a)

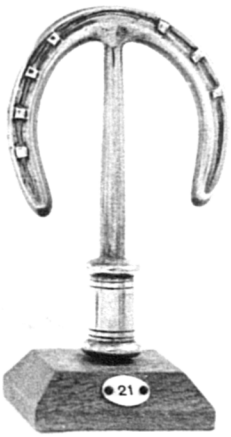
b)

c)

d)



e)



f)

g)

h)

i)

might have involved parish or neighbourhood solidarity, or might have acted as a register of membership of the civic community.

Indeed the way in which belonging was articulated in Bristol was through civic ceremonial. The coronation procession has already been mentioned, and equally important were Whitsun fetes, 'walks' and annual feasts where members appeared decked out in their regalia. The annual Foresters' fete of was high point of the year in the mid-century:

> .'...some of them were attired in forest guise of the olden time, with 'nodding plumes', bows and quivers, and others adorned with the bright green scarves, and appropriate insignia of the order, they marched, preceded by handsome banners, and attended by bands of music, to the Cattle Market in Temple Meads. There a general procession was formed and although it was denuded of the 'tableaux vivans' - such as 'Robin Hood's Last Shot', 'Maid Marian', 'Friar Tuck' and 'Little John' - which have in former years constituted a striking feature of Foresters processions, the cortege presented a very gay and imposing appearance ...' [73]

On reaching the Zoo in Clifton, the Foresters' entertainment typically included archery matches, balloon ascents, dancing on the green to a quadrille band, the imbibing of laughing gas, a 'brilliant representation of a Forester, dressed in full costume, in the act of Shooting an Arrow', and for the finale a firework display. [74]

These kinds of highly visible celebrations and the participation in them of honorary members such as the Mayor or the local MP were ways of expressing membership of the urban community, but in a way that remains ambiguous. For example, in 1858 the Odd Fellows Gala at Bristol Zoological Gardens was addressed by the Conservative Mayor J.G.Shaw. He was 'loudly cheered' when he praised their 'great respectability and general good order', and extolled the Odd Fellows' 'great principles of self-dependence and mutual co-operation ... to which they must look for the development of true independence of character among the masses'. [75] One interpretation of this event might regard the approbation of the speech as a sign of deference to the existing order,

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[73] *Bristol Mercury* 3/7/1858.
[74] *FFBJ* 27/6/1846, 4/7/1846.
[75] *Bristol Mercury* 24/7/1858.

cemented by the shared values to which Shaw referred. [76] Another might stress the continuities with ritual forms that preceded such summer galas, in which the traditional participation of leading members of the community was understood to represent and sustain social harmony. [77] In this reading it is the medium that is important, not the message. Or again, instead of wondering about the attitudes of the Odd Fellows, we might want to look more critically at the assumption that Shaw was there for the purpose of inculcating the masses with middle class values. Was he instead alert to the political platform he had been given, and the benefits which would accrue to his personal popularity and that of his party, at a time when Bristol Liberalism was in the ascendancy ? [78] Maybe he conceived of his speech as a populist reflection of his listeners' own views, rather than his own ? It was, after all, still quite common for benefit clubs to be denounced for their rotten accounting and alcoholic dissipation. [79] Assertion of one's place in a community through public display was therefore not synonomous with deference. As a primary school headmaster wrote in his log-book in 1871: '..benefit clubs may be benefits to working men, but they are a sad plague to schoolmasters. The shepherds walked the streets today and the greater part of my scholars walked off with them.' [80]

The appearance of Robin Hood in the fete described above provides a bridge to another sense of belonging felt by club members which was peculiar to the period. At first sight this appears to be another extraordinary example of the continuities of the friendly society world, since the earliest appearance of Robin in popular culure is as Lord of Misrule in late medieval May-Day revels. [81] However, this and other symbols of the affiliated orders also register a particular sense of the past which connects with *national* identity, and, as Linda Colley has forcefully argued, it was the second

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76 This is the approach taken by Alun Howkins, 'The Taming of Whitsun' op. cit., p.197.

77 Bob Bushaway op. cit., and see the comments above on continuities with gild processions.

78 Between the elections of 1852 and 1868 Bristol was represented by two Liberal MPs; David Neave op. cit., p.95 has detailed the way in which quite minor benefit club feasts in rural Yorkshire became an essential part of the local MP's constituency round, post-1884.

79 *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor* (Bristol, 1885), pp.76-7, 147.

80 St George's Brandon Hill Log, 28 July 1871, cited in S.Humphries 'Schooling and the working class in Bristol, 1870-1914', *Southern History* 1, 1979, p.187.

81 W.E.Simeone 'The May-Games and the Robin Hood Legend' *Journal of American Folk-Lore* 64 (1951) pp.265-274; David Underdown *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603-60* (Oxford, 1985) 45, 55, 57, 98, 110-1, 135, 262, 270, 282-3; Ronald Hutton *The Rise and Fall of Merrie England: The Ritual Year* (Oxford, 1994) pp.31-3, 60, 66, 67, 71, 100, 114.

quarter of the 19th century, just the time when the affiliated orders took off, that a new, popular sense of Britishness emerged. [82]

A mythical past was of great importance to the Foresters, and is evident not only in the notion of Forestry itself, but in the way that as soon as the order really began to spread it appropriated its imagery from the Robin Hood stories. The original dispensations and membership certificates had displayed Adam and Eve, the first Foresters, in the Garden of Eden, but from about the 1830s the Robin Hood imagery predominates. [83] The design closely mimicked representations of Robin in book illustrations, while the myth also influenced names of branches - Bristol courts included Robin Hood's Retreat, Earl of Huntingdon, Richard Couer de Lion, Alan a Dale, Maid Marian and Little John. [84]

No doubt every generation recreates the Robin Hood myth in its own image, but what were the attributes that made it so potent for the Foresters ? Its early nineteenth century popularity was due to two authors, Joseph Ritson, an antiquary who produced the first really thorough collection of the surviving ballads about the character, and Walter Scott, whose rendition of Robin in *Ivanhoe* was directly influenced by Ritson. [85] Two new themes were apparent in these works. Ritson, a Jacobin sympathiser writing in the 1790s, stressed in his preface the idea that Robin Hood stole from the rich to give to the poor. Walter Scott bolstered the image of Robin as popular folk-hero and also introduced a new perspective of his own, the idea that Robin and his Merry Men represented the Saxons, struggling under the Norman Yoke. [86] This was entirely unhistorical, but it is not hard to see why it might have appealed to the readership of a book published in 1818: not only did it

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[82] Linda Colley *Britons. Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Yale, 1992), ch.8.

[83] Walter G.Cooper op. cit., pp.3, 16-7.

[84] Illustrations, see J.C.Holt *Robin Hood* (London, 1982) pp.175, 179; names, PRO FS1 605, 819, 736, 741, 688, 674.

[85] J.C.Holt op. cit., pp.183-6; for Joseph Ritson, see entries in *DNB* and S.Austin Allibone *Allibone's Dictionary of English Literature and British and American Authors* vol II (Philadelphia, 1870); there were fifteen reprints of Ritson's collection between 1820 and 1890 - thanks to Stephanie Barczewski for this information.

[86] The classic discussion is Christopher Hill 'The Norman Yoke', John Saville ed., *Democracy and the Labour Movement in honour of Donna Torr* (London, 1954); for depictions of Robin as Saxon hero under the 'Norman Yoke', see eg. Pierce Egan *Robin Hood and Little John* (1849), Anne Bowman *The Boy Foresters* (1868) and George Emmett *Robin Hood and the Outlaws of Sherwood Forest* (1869): I owe these references to Stephanie Barczewski, whose forthcoming thesis will greatly enrich our understanding of Robin's cultural role.

connect with anti-French sentiment, it also echoed the appeal to lost rights that was so central to the popular radicalism of the time. [87]

The Druids Friendly Society (established in 1781) had borrowed the imagery of the earlier, antiquarian Druid Order, adopting their costume and symbols, which included hooded robes, grey-haired wigs and fake beards and brass harps and sickles. [88] All this was designed to conjure a romantic conception of Ancient Britain which underpinned national identity. [89] The point was brought home in the initiation ceremony where the candidate was reminded of the fact that the society had originated with the pre-Roman Druids. [90] The original pass-word and initiation ritual made heavy reference to Caesar's invasion of Britain and the expedition to Mona, where supposedly the Druids were suppressed.

In addition to satisfying a new sense of patriotism a second specifically nineteenth century appeal of club life was its gender exclusivity. The friendly society world was a single-sex ambience. The language of the rule-books and the nature of the benefits paid assumed a male membership. The words 'brotherly', 'brothers', 'male', appear in some of the club names though it was most common for a male society's title to be non-gender specific. [91] Conversely, of the nineteen women's societies whose records survive, only two, the Royal Oak Society and the Old Union Society, did *not* contain the word 'female', 'women' or 'sisters' in its title. [92] The single-sex nature of friendly society conviviality was central to the appeal. Women could only '...continue in the Room while paying their husbands or friends' money' and even when rules were relaxed to allow wives to join the annual feast: the Friendly Union Society added a rider that '..should any member use foul language or sing

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87 See also E.J.Hobsbawm *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Manchester, 1959) 'Introduction'.

88 A series of articles by W.North in the *East London Observer* 6/81932 - 17/9/1932 is most informative on the Druids' history.

89 The appropriation of the Druids for the romantic myth of Ancient Britain is discussed in Stuart Pigott *The Druids* (London, 1968) ch. iv, and Ronald Hutton *The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles: Their Nature and Legacy* (Oxford, 1991), pp.140-2; popular urban histories of the nineteenth century promoted an awareness of pre-Roman origins, see in the case of Bristol, Samuel Seyer *Memoirs Historical and Topographical of Bristol and its Neighbourhood vol I* (Bristol, 1821) and George Pryce *A Popular History of Bristol* (Bristol, 1861) pp.1-11; Victorian schoolbooks characterised Caesar as a tyrant, and in some cases treated Druidism sympathetically, Valerie E.Chancellor *History for their Masters* (Bath, 1970), pp.71, 72, 96.

90 *Ceremonies to be used in all Lodges of the United Ancient Order of Druids* (1923).

91 PRO FS 1 175, 562, 596, 651, 602, 631, 586.

92 Ibid., 91 567, 575, 583, 584, 587, 593, 548, 666, 616, 620; BRO FS 8 13, 14, 17; BRO P/Tm/E1: (12), (16) (39) (52).

an indecent song after nine o'clock in the Evening he shall be fined one shilling.' [93] This stricture suggests what the atmosphere of the male club room was like in the absence of women.

The idea of 'manliness' was important to participants. The adjective itself was a popular one, as in the correspondent to the Foresters' Miscellany who praised 'Brother Stead's honest and *manly* letter', or the vote of censure passed by Court City of Bristol against their District Chief Ranger for his '..*unmanly* conduct at the funeral of Brother Strange'. [94] Images of masculinity also ran through the initiation into Forestry. In the early days the candidate had to undergo a fight with another member before admission, initially with swords, though in 1838 clubs were substituted, as a symbolic representation of the fight that a Forester had to undertake against the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil. [95] The sign was designed to represent Eve's offering of the forbidden fruit to Adam, another warning against temptation. Having learnt these secrets and been invested with his sash the new Forester had the moral characteristics of manliness spelt out for him. 'In your domestic relationships we look to find you - if a husband, affectionate and trustful - if a father, regardful of the moral and material well-being of your children and dependents - as a son, dutiful and exemplary.' [96]

At one level then the clubs provided an opportunity for a man's night out away from the family, though paradoxically this was actually legitimised by his responsibility *for* the family. But they also operated at a deeper level, with the ritual and secrets of the orders both shoring up and re-creating masculine identity. The history of nineteenth century masculinity lags far behind work on feminine identity and the question of why such elaborate male association occurred at this particular point cannot be addressed here- though Mark Carnes' work on American fraternities is suggestive. [97]

So, whether we look at friendly societies from the perspective of long-term continuities or of specific 19th century appeal, there is rather more to them than just the '..Victorian ethic of

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93 PRO FS 1 580, 581.
94 *The Foresters Miscellany* July 1886; *Minute Book of Court City of Bristol A.O.F.* Feb. 1845.
95 Walter G.Cooper op. cit., pp.10, 16-7; and see E.J.Hobsbawm *Primitive Rebels* ch. ix for initiation as 'ceremonies of soldarity'.
96 *Formularies and Lectures of the Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society* n.d. pp.21-3.
97 A seminal work is Keith McClelland 'Masculinity and the 'Representative Artisan' in Britain, 1850-80', Michael Roper and John Tosh ed., *Manful Assertions: Maculinity in Britain since 1800* (London, 1991); Mark C.Carnes *Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America* (Yale, 1989) addresses fraternal ceremonies from the perspective of comparative anthropolgy's reading of male initiation; see also the comments of John Tosh *History Workshop Journal* 35, (1993) p.260.

providence and self-help'. In particular the elaborate ceremonies and lectures of the affiliated orders return again and again to the theme of individual responsibility within the civic community, and the way in which this was reinforced by mutual association. Benevolence, 'geniality', local democracy, and mutual aid in the branch were all seen as attributes which could benefit the family and society through the individual's acceptance of his duties and responsibilities. The Foresters' funeral service sums it up well.

> 'As Foresters, we strive to encourage all that is good and sympathetic in man. We point out to our members their duty as husbands, fathers and citizens. We teach them the obligations of mutual dependence, the value of mutual help, and the beauty of mutual sympathy. Here, by the grave of one who has proved the efficacy of these principles, we reiterate our faith in them and restate our belief that they are necessary to the well-being of the human race. We urge their wider acceptance and their more perfect fulfilment, in order that the time may more speedily come when all mankind shall be Brethren.' [98]

The constitutive power of this language of mutual responsibility should not be overstated. Clearly some people joined friendly societies and left quickly deciding it was not for them; others had deceitful motives and joined a club for short term gain; every single one of the members had their own calculation with regard to the insurance benefit that they and their family would receive. There was also a practical purpose. For example the stress on unity and benevolence would incline younger members of clubs in financial trouble away from the temptation of dissolution and division of funds. Likewise, a sense of mutual obligation would restrain those considering making a false claim on the box.

With these reservations in mind, we must nevertheless make what we can of the surviving evidence for mutuality, and it is significant firstly to note what is absent or peripheral. The middle-class version of Smilesian self-help and the 'independence and respectability' of the artisan elite make only the most fleeting appearances. [99] 'Thrift' was only one among many symbols on the Odd

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98 *Formularies and Lectures of the Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society* p.72.

99 For the suspicion that the 'labour aristocrat' and the 'respectable' working class were discursive constructs, representing middle class observers' normative or prescriptive articulation of working class behaviour, see Peter Bailey "'Will the Real Bill Banks

Fellows' coat of arms, 'prudence' is mentioned in passing in the Foresters' funeral oration, but on the whole personal financial habits are set in the context of kindness and of the individual's responsibility to the group. [100] The absence of 'respectability' as a measure of individual status, is therefore unsurprising, though the word does appear once, in the Druid initiation where maintaining the respectability of the order is mentioned - in other words it's seen as mutual obligation. [101] 'Independence' from poor law or charity was certainly a part of the rhetoric with which the leadership of friendly societies addressed government, but it played no part in the way the clubs defined their purpose to themselves, save for one brief reference in a Forester's lecture to: 'the independent and manly right of every Brother' to draw from the common fund. [102] What remains is a powerful sense of the individual as part of a community in which the striving towards certain moral values such as benevolence, selflessness, and peace worked for the good of the self, the family and civil society. It was optimistic, envisaging security and progress through these moral values, and it expressed a consensual view of the social order, in which individualism always gave way to the group interest.

f) Evaluation

The membership figures discussed above are suggestive of continuing success for the societies in the period, even if they were never able to increase their coverage towards a universal scheme. [103] While convivial and leisure aspirations were met by the orders' public activities, rituals and elaborately graded hierarchies, can the clubs' broader contribution to the aid of families at times of life-crisis be evaluated further ? [104] As in the endowed charities a theme of rationalisation and

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Please Stand Up?" Towards a Role Analysis of Mid-Victorian Working-Class Respectability' *Journal of Social History* 13, (1979) pp.336-353; Patrick Joyce *Visions of the People* op. cit., p.57; Alistair Reid 'Intelligent artisans and aristocrats of labour: the essays of Thomas Wright', J.Winter ed. *The Working Class in Modern British History. Essays in Honour of Henry Pelling* (Cambridge, 1983).

100 BRO 36771 Odd Fellows Booklet p.3; *Formularies and Lectures of the Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society* p.68.

101 *Ceremonies to be used in all Lodges of the United Ancient Order of Druids* p.7.

102 *Foresters Miscellany* 1/1882: *Formularies and Lectures of the Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society* p.51.

103 As was also the case in France, see A.Mitchell 'The Function and Malfunction of Mutual Aid Societies in Nineteenth Century France' in Jonathan Barry and Colin Jones ed., *Medicine and Charity Before the Welfare State* (London 1991).

104 An Odd Fellows hierarchy was: the Noble Grand who presided, the Vice Grand, who assisted in 'preserving conduct', the Grand Master, the Treasurer who gave security and took charge of the funds, two Secretaries who minuted meetings and supervised accounts, the Left and Right Supporters who helped keep order and see members gave 'the signs correctly', the Warden, who had charge of Lodge property, the Guardian, who attended the door to hear the pass-word and bar the inebriated, the Lecture Master who presided over initiations, and the Sick Visitors who administered the sickness benefit, PRO FS 1 580, 581, 716.

centralisation may be discerned, marked by the move towards the affiliated orders and the intervention of the state, and these surely explain the continuing appeal. [105] From the mid-century members could use the clearance and travelling pay systems to enjoy geographical mobility without losing benefits, and greater efforts towards actuarial soundness were made, with mortality returns required, and central promotion of graded contributions according to age. [106]

The distancing from the localised and small-scale world of the early benefit clubs is also traceable in the societies' changing relationship to the medical world. Early friendly society interventions in a member's sickness had been administrative and pastoral, but not diagnostic or curative. [107] However, from the mid-century it had become usual for the orders and the surviving local societies to employ a doctor who would supply 'medical attendance and medicine' to sick members. [108] Employment was on a contract basis with the annual fee dependent on the number of members. [109] The goal was rationalisation and efficiency: 'We thought the surgeon's certificate enough. It was *his* business to see we were not imposed upon...' [110] In addition to averting impositions by giving sick notes, doctors also notified stewards in cases where there was danger of contagion to visitors, provided affidavits on the birth of a child before the payment of lying-in money, and conducted initial examinations of proposed new members to ensure no high risk candidates were admitted. [111] In all these cases the aim was to lessen liability by the reference to a professional arbiter and hence save on costs.

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105 Young p.1.

106 Young pp.53, 59; PRO FS1 681; P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England* op. cit., pp.76-78, Appendix A; for the gradual adoption by the orders of the contribution scales proposed by Neison and Ratcliffe, see P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England* op. cit., ch.4.

107 For guidelines for those visiting sick members see for example BRO FS 5, 8, 10.

108 PRO FS 1 716; see also P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England* op. cit., pp.138-149, and H.Marland op. cit., pp.192-6; in contrast to other areas there is only most minor evidence of clubs subscribing to the Infirmary or Dispensary, presumably because emergencies were treated gratis, while a large subscription would have been required to have admitted more than a handful of cases annually: BRO 35893/21/ a), c),e), BRL B7891 H.Marland op. cit., pp.195-6; Amanda Berry 'Patterns of Patronage' op. cit., pp.11-12, shows Northamptonshire rural clubs subscribing to the Northampton General Hospital from the 1780s.

109 PRO FS 1 99, 548, 716: the Loyal Victoria Society of Females paid 2s. per member, the Loyal Great Eastern Odd Fellows paid 4s., while Rechabites could choose whether or not to pay 1d. a week for the doctor's attendance.

110 Young p.65.

111 PRO FS 1 580, 581, 716.

There was a broader significance to this. Firstly, contact with a doctor through the friendly society was essential to breaking down popular resistance to scientific medicine. [112] Low income patients were technically eligible for medical care from the Corporation of the Poor, but prejudice and pragmatism were deterrents. [113] Bristol's Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths, Thomas Gilbert, explained the problem to the 1854 Select Committee on Poor Relief:

> 'One reason is that in going to obtain a note, they have to go where the paupers receive their pay; there is an association with the paupers of which they disapprove, together with the fact that they become paupers themselves and lose many privileges in Bristol ... there is a large amount of charity distributed to parties who are not paupers..'. [114]

Gilbert went on to suggest that once applicants became paupers to obtain medical relief they were far more likely to remain 'chargeable to the parish', having once sacrificed their independence; at the same time reluctance to apply often led to help only being sought when disease was far advanced or fatal. Friendly society health provision offered a way round this impasse. A further benefit of the contract system was the opportunities it provided for young doctors in an 'overcrowded profession': it provided a fresh avenue of employment, and perhaps a first step on the career ladder with the chance to establish oneself in a locality.[115] There followed a constant tension between the medical hierarchy who were anxious that fees be kept high, and those doctors who were prepared to undercut colleagues to secure the career benefits of working for a club, suggesting that it undermined professional monopoly. [116]

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112 Virginia Berridge 'Health and Medicine' in F.M.L.Thompson ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 3 Social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990) pp.187-8; Ruth Richardson op. cit.; the public hostility to the anatomisation of a Bristol criminal in 1826 is illustrated in the case of John Horwood, collected in the Richard Smith papers, BRO 35893/36 vii); the historiography is not unanimous on this matter however, as Irvine Loudon's *Medical Care and the General Practitioner 1750-1850* (Oxford, 1986) suggests that ordinary people were in fact quite accustomed to contact with medical doctors by this time.

113 PP 1834 xxviii *Appendix to the First Report from the Commissioners on the Poor Laws* p.512A described St Peter's, as 'rather an infirmary and hospital'; its medical officer earned £150 pa. + maintenance to attend patients in the workhouse or to visit in their homes those sick poor who applied to the master.

114 PP 1854 xii *Minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Select Committee on Medical Relief* pp.503-5; for the prohibtion on paupers receiving endowed charities see Chapter 3 d).

115 Irvine Loudon op. cit., ch.10, Appendix vii; according to the Bristol Trade Directories, in 1791 there were 27 surgeons, 9 physicians, 24 apothecaries and 10 chemist/druggists in the city; by 1860 this had grown to 108 surgeons, 25 physicians, 6 medicine vendors and 70 chemist/druggists: these should be treated as minimum numbers.

116 P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England* op. cit., pp.145-8; H.Marland op. cit., p.194.

The evolution of friendly societies in the mid-century was therefore marked by rationalisation and improvement, but how successful were they ? Others have surveyed the range of benefits available in some detail, and the sums paid out by Bristol societies may be viewed in Appendix 4. [117] Benefit levels set out in rule-books must be viewed with caution - they could be be reduced or suspended if the branch funds dwindled dangerously. Also, registration and regular returns were so patchy and sporadic that the rate of dissolution of branches is hard to ascertain. [118] Nor can it be confidently said that the benefit clubs managed to overcome the spectre of risk in a way which would have allowed them to become universal. As George Young reported in 1874:

> 'Many elderly working men have said to me, with reference to the uncertainty which hangs over the future of the Odd Fellows and all other sick clubs, "If I had to begin again, I would not spend a farthing on a sick club, but invest all my savings on insurance of my life; at least you get something for your money so".' [119]

What was the cause of such disillusion ?

A persistent difficulty facing the societies had been establishing the appropriate relationship between contribution and benefit levels to ensure solvency in the long term. Although it seemed by the 1860s that actuarial advances had conquered this problem, other factors were working to sustain it, and these became apparent as Parliament began to synthesize the membership and payment data remitted to the Registrar. Appendix 5 sets out some of the findings. [120] These show the clubs experienced a rise in sickness spending between 1855 and 1875 (though the Foresters curbed their outlay slightly 1871-5). The Odd Fellows paid out on average slightly more than the Foresters, suggesting that the 'better class' of membership could expect more generous treatment, while clubs

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117 Margaret Fuller op. cit., ch.4; David Neave op. cit., pp.72-85; Dot Jones op. cit., pp.342-3.

118 Of the 172 Bristol societies enrolled up to 1859, the dissolution of a mere 18 was recorded, but very many more might have collapsed; a non-existant society was hardly likely to respond to the Registrar's enquiries. Some clubs folded rapidly after an unsuccessful launch, such as the Good Intent Annual Benefit Society (1851-53), while the duration of others perhaps coincided more nearly to the lifespan of the cohort which originally formed it, like the Female Bristol Young Union Society (1804-55), see PRO FS1/615, 584..

119 Young p.28.

120 PP. 1852-3 c; PP 1880 lxviii; although previous historians have made reference to these, interest has mostly been confined to the extremely vague occupational division employed in the 1880 abstract (light labour with/without exposure, heavy labour with/without exposure) see P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England* op. cit., p.83, H.Marland op. cit., pp199-202; the latter uses the material to establish sickness levels, but none of the clubs in Huddersfield and Wakefield selected by Marland showed returns for all four quinquennial periods, and therefore her reading misleadingly suggests static rates of sickness.

with a large number of members were not necessarily those which on average paid out the most benefit, (for example the Marquis of Worcester) It therefore need not have been the case that the anonymity of the large branch militated against a conscientious attitude to claims. One thing which all the high benefit level clubs do have in common is age, with the bigger spending branches all originating in the 1840s, and the low spenders being those of most recent foundation. [121] The high rates of the local societies 1845-50 broadly confirm this, with the more recently founded spending markedly less.

These trends are suggestive of intractable problems. The longer a club lasted the higher the average age of members became, and hence the greater the likelihood of sickness benefit being required. Only the steady attraction of new blood could remedy the situation, but several factors inhibited this, such as the impact of economic fluctuations on disposable income and the growth of competing savings institutions. Added to this were the changing mortality and morbidity regimes which led to increasing demand for sickness benefit. Advances in sanitary planning and improved diet contributed to the decline of aggregate death rates from the 1870s, and the epidemiological transition, which saw the replacement of the fatal epidemic diseases by longer-term, non-communicable illnesses can also be dated to around 1870. [122] Solutions to the challenge of rising demand on 'the box' undermined the original attractions of the world of the benefit club. Greater centralisation to enforce graduated contributions and thus improve the security of insurance was not always welcomed by the branches. [123] It ran counter to the prevailing sense that one was joining a fraternal lodge where sociability necessarily limited size, and was a departure from the local democracy that had characterised earlier friendly societies. Central direction also sat uneasily with

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121 High spenders: Robin Hood's Retreat, Edward Colston, Philanthropic, Good Intent, City of Bristol, St Andrews, Humanity; low spenders Lady Christabel, Avon Lodge.

122 James C.Riley *Sickness, Recovery and Death: A History and Forecast of Ill Health* (London, 1989) pp.69-72, ch.6; Timothy B.Gage 'The Decline of Mortality in England and Wales 1861 to 1964: Decomposition by Cause of Death and Component of Mortality' *Population Studies*, 47, (1993) pp.47-66 for the argument that the impact of degenerative diseases on mortality trends began earlier than has hitherto been supposed; see also Virginia Berridge op. cit., 191-203; B.Gilbert op. cit., pp.171-2; H.Marland op. cit., p.203.

123 The Oddfellows had adopted graduated contributions in 1853, although their earlier imposition of fixed limits to contributions and benefits had sparked an internal rift and the establishment of the breakaway National Independent Order of Oddfellows; the other large orders only adopted graduated payments in the 1880s: see P.H.J.H.Gosden *Friendly Societies* op. cit., pp.28, 105-6, 212.

the branch culture of ritual and secrecy which established membership of the 'in-group'. [124] Equally damaging was the risk of polarisation between young and old within the individual branch. A majority of the younger members of one Bristol Odd Fellows lodge voted to charge 'over-age money', an extra levy of 6d per month on all the older members, on the grounds that 'the old men had had too much out by way of benefit'. [125]

Historians have tended to regard the closing years of the century as the point when 'financial malaise' overtook the friendly societies, as they faced demographic pressures, the growth of commercial life assurance, new leisure patterns, and increasing distance between local branch and central bureaucracy. [126] The Bristol case-study suggests that although membership levels held up well in the mid-century, the affiliated orders were only a short-term success, for the problem of financial stability was not solved. Meanwhile, the factors which had once given the clubs their impetus - conviviality, small-scale democratic control, gender exclusivity, and the focus of community - were undermined. These difficulties help explain why, when proposals for state pensions were mooted, the friendly society leadership, after initial hostility, rapidly fell into line with the wishes of its rank and file, and backed National Insurance.[127]

Conclusion

Section II began with an assertion of the economic significance of friendly societies in the world of nineteenth century voluntarism, and this chapter has detailed their social and cultural significance. It supports revisionist accounts which have questioned the association of the clubs with the labour aristocracy, and challenges interpretations of friendly societies as emblematic of Smilesian self-help, or abstract notions of respectability and providentialism. [128] Instead the Bristol case-study has shown a consistently large scale of membership attracted to organisations whose rich cultural life evoked the gild traditions of group solidarity and participation in civic ritual, as well as

124 E.J.Hobsbawm *Primitive Rebels* op. cit., p.158.
125 Young p.52.
126 H.Marland op. cit., p.202; B.Gilbert op. cit., p.170; P.H.J.H.Gosden *Friendly Societies* op. cit., ch.9; though David Green op. cit., provides a more optimistic reading.
127 James H. Treble 'The Attitudes of Friendly Societies towards the Movement in Great Britain for State Pensions, 1878-1908' *International Review of Social History* 15, (1970) pp.266-299.
128 See Geoffrey Finlayson *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990* (Oxford, 1994) ch.I for a recent invocation of Smiles in this context.

'invented traditions' that spoke to the current concerns of the male English worker. It has also charted what Beveridge called the 'pioneer work' of the friendly societies in developing health insurance, through such devices as the clearance system, and the use of club doctors. [129] Yet by the last quarter of the nineteenth century it was clear that the vitality of the movement was constrained. Irregular income and gender exclusivity were prohibitive, and unresolved tensions between the convivial and the rational, the young and the old, and the locality and the centre persisted.

129 Lord Beveridge *Voluntary Action: A Report on Methods of Social Advance* (London, 1948) p.74.

Chapter 7

Mutuality and Associational Life

Given the limitations of the friendly society, this chapter will consider to what extent other voluntary associations predicated upon mutual aid succeeded in providing security for their members. It begins by demonstrating the presence of a language of mutual care in eighteenth century clubs and charities, then analyses the rather undistinguished efforts of nineteenth century philanthropists to establish 'elite-led' benefit clubs. This is followed by a survey of associations that combined mutualist, commercial and philanthropic aspects. Finally the late arrival of the co-operative movement in the city is examined.

a) The eighteenth century

Chapter 6 pointed to the importance to the friendly societies of gild traditions, and mutualist rhetoric also figured in the eighteenth century associations of the middling sort, although it had all but disappeared by the early nineteenth century. One area in which such collective values were invoked was Freemasonry. A sermon to local Masons by John Price in 1747 urged:

> 'Whatever, therefore, is the Concern of one, is the Care of all; For every one is indispensably obliged not only to be compassionate and benevolent, but to administer that Relief and Comfort, which the Condition of any Member requires, and he can bestow without manifest Inconvenience to himself.... For everyone here is another Self; and he, that hates another, must necessarily abhor himself also;' [1]

Such appeals evoked a tradition of group solidarity for mutual support. They expressed a philosophy that would have been recognisable to friendly society members, whose goals were the same, if usually expressed in more prosaic terms: '...the time may come when it will be each of our lots to stand in need of that necessary support, the preparation for which we make by uniting together in Society...'. [2] There are also parallels in ritual behaviour. The enthusiasm of the Charity Trustees

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1 BRL 5860 John Price *The Advantages of Unity Considered, sermon preached before the Antient and Honourable Society of Free and Accepted Masons* (1747) p.9.

2 PRO FS 1 595, Bristol Total Abstinence Benefit Society.

and friendly societies for processions has already been noted, and the Masons' continuing role in such events can also be seen as a display of urban hierarchy redolent of a gild Corpus Christi. [3]

Mutuality, charity and gild traditions were also observable in the behaviour of the county societies, which were active from the 1650s. [4] The Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire (all 1657-8) and Herefordshire (1726) societies were joined by the Welsh 'Antient Britons' (1733) and Scottish clubs, the aim being to provide a social nexus for those whose origin was in the respective regions. [5] Conviviality was integral to their activities, with an annual procession, feast and drinking songs. The sums raised were spent on '..poor Lying-In Women, apprenticing friendless Orphans', for which applicants petitioned following the annual dinner. [6] Benevolence was perceived in a mutual rather than hierarchical context, as another John Price sermon, this time to the Antient Britons reveals:

> 'And Lastly, That no Dissentions may disgrace this Feast of Charity, give me leave to recommend to you, Order and Harmony, as the most likely Means of uniting and supporting our Society, to that noble purpose of enabling it in a few Years, to relieve the Distressed and Indigent amongst us.' [7]

This blurring of function between 'horizontal' and 'vertical' charity can be perceived in more specialised associations, such as the Sons of Clergy (established 1691), the Mariners and Shipmasters (1748), the Captains Society (1777) and the Society of Mariners (1749), where the function of the benefit club combined with the hierarchical structure of the later subscription societies. The Sons of Clergy promoted a sense of occupational solidarity and also raised funds through its annual dinner, sermons and collections for the purpose of apprenticing clergymen's sons in respectable trades. [8] The Captains Society exhorted donations from both above and below:

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3 See above, Chapter 4, note 113 for the procession marking the restoration of St Mary Redcliffe, and Chapter 6, e); the Masons also feature in Robert Greethead's 'The Procession in Bristol celebrating the Coronation of William IV and Queen Adelaide' (*Fig. 6.1*) behind the clergy, the Colston scholars, and in front of the Corporation of the Poor and the vestries.

4 Jonathan Barry 'The Cultural Life of Bristol, 1640-1775' D.Phil. Oxford University (1985), pp.170-2, and idem. 'Bristol Charities in the 18th Century', Bristol Record Society lecture 27/2/1993.

5 Jonathan Barry 'The Cultural Life of Bristol' op. cit., p.179, notes 5, 7, 8 for dates.

6 Ibid., pp.179-81; see for example *FFBJ* 5/3/1774, 19/3/1774, Ancient Britons, 9/7/1774, Herefordshire, 6/8/1774, 27/8/1774, Wiltshire, 15/8/1774, 10/9/1774, Somersetshire, 27/8/1774, 17/9/1774, Gloucestershire, and 9/7/1774, 16/11/1774, for Somersetshire Society meeting weekly at the Bell in Broad St., to receive petitions.

7 BRL 9628 John Price *The Antiquity of the Festival of St David asserted. A Sermon preached before the Society of Antient Britons* (1754) p.21.

8 Jonathan Barry 'The Cultural Life of Bristol' op. cit., pp.172-3; female supporters were advised each year that there would be a special collection 'at the Church Door for Clergymen's Daughters', see *FFBJ* 15/8/1774, 2/9/1797; *Bristol Gazette* 21/8/1806.

'Many are the Advantages which would accrue to themselves, and to the Public, if the Sailors ... would establish a Fund equal to the Demands of their future Necessities....And did the Merchants in general duly consider to whose Bounty they are indebted for the plentiful Returns of Commerce ... we should see a large Addition to those respectable Names which now grace your List.' [9]

Traditions of mutual aid were therefore evident in the newer forms of charitable association. Of course there were a range of other meanings attached to participation in a charity, such as political and religious affiliation: the various Colston commemorative societies were thus split, with the Tories and Whigs represented by the Dolphin (1749) and Anchor (1769) Societies respectively. [10] The new charities also mingled notions of mutual and hierarchical giving in their appeal. Why should this have been so ? Firstly, in order to attract membership they adhered to recognisable patterns of civic ritual and group behaviour, in which, owing to the gild tradition, mutuality had been firmly embedded for centuries. Secondly, the chosen functions of the new charities, apprenticing and support for child-bearing women, suggest a conception of need centred on the integrity of the family or household as the 'core' unit of city life. The charitable relationship was not a straightforward hierarchy of rich and poor, but sprang instead from this mutualist vision of the city as community of households. [11]

By the early nineteenth century benevolent associations were shedding these aspects of their identity and evolving towards a 'vertical' model of charity, along the lines of the hospital subscription system, with its offer of a more direct channel of patronage between have and have-not. Traces of mutuality can still be detected, for example in the National Benevolent Institution (For the Relief of Distressed Persons in the Middle Ranks of Life), founded in 1813 (Bristol branch, 1814). It is tempting to depict this organisation as the epitome of middle-class self-absorption, but again the language of fraternity and mutual aid is present in an early printed appeal:

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9 BRL 931 John Camplin (canon of Bristol) *The Duty of providing for a Family Recommended and Enforced in a Sermon preached before the Society of Captains Belonging to the Port of Bristol* (1789) pp.11, 15.

10 J.W.Arrowsmith op. cit., pp. 110-111; Jonathan Barry 'The Cultural Life of Bristol' op. cit., pp.178-9.

11 These comments are based on the views of Jonathan Barry 'Bristol Charities in the 18th Century' op. cit.

'Here, then, is a treasury opened, into which the opulent may cast off their abundance...and into which the tradesman of every description may drop his mite ... towards the prosperity of a fund, to which he himself may one day be under the hard necessity of having recourse for aid.' [12]

Attachment to the form and rhetoric of eighteenth century charities, with their sermons, processions and pub feasts, remained typical for the older societies and for the post-1835 Charity Trustees in their dealings with the endowed schools. However overtly mutualist sentiment of the sort articulated in the last extract became increasingly unusual in the efflorescence of subscription charity which marked the early nineteenth century . [13]

Why was this ? The motives of the later philanthropists are examined in next section, but it is also helpful to see eighteenth century associationalism as a transient response to contingent circumstances. Different historians have stressed different pressures. Peter Clark has viewed societies as products of a particular phase of urban development, performing a necessary role of social integration during the passage from the pre-industrial to the modern. [14] For John Brewer the clubs' language of unity and religious heterogeneity was indicative of their economic purpose, with membership a badge of credit-worthiness, and attachment to 'tradesman-like, bourgeois values' as distinct from the 'client economy'. [15] John Money has characterised Freemasonry as a 'major agent' in Hanoverian politics, pointing to its celebration of tradition and its participation in public ritual ('...a new form of corporate civic Christianity...') as essential preconditions for the popular loyalism that flourished in the 1790's. [16] What all these verdicts point to is the conclusion that in the eighteenth century notions of fellowship and fraternity held meaning to middling sorts striving to assert their values in the changing city, but thereafter became less important. It may be that mutual

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12 BRL B1534 National Benevolent Instituition, Bristol District, p.17; see F.K.Prochaska Philanthropy' in F.M.L.Thompson ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 3 Social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990), p.374 who explains such associations in terms of changes to crown pension arrangements.

13 See below Chapter 9 a).

14 Peter Clark *Sociability and urbanity: clubs and societies in the eighteenth century city* (Leicester, 1986).

15 J.Brewer 'Commercialisation and Politics' in N.McKendrick, J.Brewer, and J.H.Plumb *The Birth of a Consumer Society: the Commercialization of Eighteenth Century England* (London, 1982) ch.5, esp.217-30, quote p.228; L.Davidoff and C.Hall *Family Fortunes, Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London, 1987) pp.208, 425-7, stress not only the social connections but the role of masonry in the 'making' of the middle class male identity.

16 John Money 'Freemasonry and the Fabric of Loyalism in Hanoverian England' in Eckhart Hellmuth ed. *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990), quotations pp.255, 259-60.

benevolence still informed the sentiments of the casual alms-giver after 1800, but it was not to be a major feature of voluntary charity.

b) 'Elite-led' mutuality.

At the same time as the charities were shedding their mutualist aspects philanthropists were turning their attention to the benefit clubs, now seen as a suitable vehicle for charitable intervention. How successful was this project ? From the earliest government legislation on friendly societies the assumption was made that a club need not be entirely reliant on mutual effort, but could also draw on the charitable contribution of the better off. Rose's Act in 1793 envisaged 'a society of good fellowship for raising by the subscriptions of the members thereof *or by voluntary contributions* a fund..'. [17] Hierarchical involvement was initially a feature of rural benefit clubs; for example, just outside Bristol the club at The Goat Inn, Westbury-on-Trym, hoped that 'Such Gentlemen who feel the Expediency and Utility of this Institution' would want to become honorary members, in return for a one guinea subscription each year. [18] This approach soon provoked more elaborate ventures.

The Prudent Man's Friend Society (hereafter PMFS) was founded in 1813 to attack poverty from a variety of directions, one of which was the formation of benefit clubs. It was one of a new breed of 'inclusive' voluntary societies of the early nineteenth century, in which all branches of the elite could participate regardless of sect or politics. [19] Three aspects of the PMFS's programme were aimed at promoting self-help. One was 'the establishment of a Benefit Club, particularly for females, upon such a plan as shall remove the objections to some of the existing societies of this kind.' These failings were the 'perpetual instances of bankruptcy in the common clubs;' and 'the enormous expenses attendant on the funerals of the deceased members etc..'. The second was a Savings Bank for the poor, with deposits invested in Government securities. [20] Finally, a fund providing interest-

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17 33 Geo III, c.54, my italics.

18 BRO 07898; S.R.Woods *Westbury-on-Trym* vol 5 'Friendly Societies' (1975) unpublished, copy in BRO; the most well known examples are the female benefit societies run by Hannah and Martha More in Shipham and Cheddar, see Martha More *Mendip Annals* (London, 1859) edited with additional material by Arthur Roberts, passim.

19 BRL 9180-1 *State of the Prudent Man's Friend Society for the year 1814* (Bristol 1814); *3rd. Annual Report of the Prudent Man's Friend Society* (Bristol, 1815); the membership is discussed in more detail in Martin Gorsky 'Experiments in Poor Relief: Bristol 1816-1817' *The Local Historian* 25, 1 (1995) pp.17-30.

20 The Bristol PMFS was one of the first groups in England to operate a savings bank with trustees: two benevolent vicars started 'Sunday banks' for their parishes in 1798 and 1808, see H.Oliver Horne *A History of Savings Banks* (London, 1947) esp. pp.58-9; P.H.J.H.Gosden *Self-Help, Voluntary Associations in the 19th Century* (London, 1973), p.210. Gosden is probably

free loans was established 'to enable the deserving Poor to better their condition', which, it was hoped, would promote 'that goodwill and kindness which should ever subsist between the higher and lower classes of the community.' [21]

Each of these ventures had a different fate. The Society's 1814 report lamented the lack of support for the benefit club scheme in these terms: 'the minds of the lower classes are not yet sufficiently prepared by education to receive a plan which principally promises distant advantages.' By 1815 the idea had been quietly forgotten and dropped. Meanwhile the annual reports proudly catalogued the rising deposits to the savings bank, from £ 537 in 1813, to £ 2275 in 1815. The loan fund was equally popular, with £ 3133 - 10s lent out in the first three years, in sums averaging £ 4. At first sight this may seem paradoxical, since the success of the bank and loan scheme indicates that the poorer saver had no intention of boycotting the Society as a whole. One obvious explanation of the benefit clubs' unpopularity is that although they may well have been more secure under PMFS management, they did not fulfil any of those social or convivial functions. Another reason may have been the stigma associated with the PMFS' other activites in trying to suppress street-begging. [22]

The failure of the PMFS did not inhibit the formation in 1825 of the next hierarchical benefit club to emerge, the South Gloucestershire Friendly Society (hereafter SGFS). Following the establishment of the Essex Provident in 1818 a spate of 'county societies' had been started, with unelected committees and philanthropic honorary members. [23] Six out of its twelve committee members of the SGFS were members or close relatives of ex-PMFS subscribers, but like other county societies its figureheads were drawn from the local nobility, with the Duke of Beaufort as Patron and the Lord De Clifford as President. It was open only to those residing in Bristol's suburbs and neighbouring villages, which were arranged into five comprehensive divisions, each financially supported by its own set of honorary members. [24]

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wrong to suggest that the first English savings bank 'on the later trustee pattern' was the Provident Institution of Bath, founded 1815, since the PMFS lists three 'trustees' in its 1814 report.

21 *Bristol Journal* 1/1/1814, 24/12/1814.

22 Martin Gorsky 'Experiments' op. cit.

23 P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England, 1815-1875* (Manchester, 1961), pp.52-55.

24 BRL: B7435 *South Gloucestershire Friendly Society. Tract explanatory of the nature and benefits of this society* (Bristol 1825); BRL B7437 *South Gloucestershire Friendly Society 5th Report of the Stapleton, Winterbourne etc Association*

How successful was the SGFS ? Like the PMFS, its rationale was the belief that most existing benefit societies were poorly run, unreliable, and likely to become insolvent. It should have been attractive, since it offered a rationalised and better managed system. Membership was much more open, being accessible to both men *and* women aged from 10 to 50, who could choose from 10 classes of payment/ benefit level. Sick pay was graded into 'bedlying pay' and 'walking pay' (depending on how *ill* one was), while annuities, and endowments on children could also be taken out. Monthly payments were assessed according to age, and personal attendance was not required. Sureties were provided by the Treasurer and Secretaries, with stock invested in government securities.

Despite its flexibility and inclusiveness the club lasted only 27 years. Dissembling members exploited the largesse of philanthropic patrons, abusing the system of 'walking pay' which had been designed to meet the needs of those whose illness did not actually confine them to bed. The excessive volume of claims for this loosely formulated entitlement made the club unviable - a characteristic problem: 'Patronized societies are, however, obliged to be strict, since their constitution does not enlist so strong a feeling in their members against imposition. Many have failed from this cause..'. [25] Also, like the PMFS the Society's rhetoric was unable to capture the attention of the potential club member because the aspirations of the poor were not properly understood. It was assumed that the motivation for joining a benefit society was essentially economistic and individualistic, 'frugality' and the desire for 'honest and respectable independence': '..no man who properly values his character and credit will have recourse to the parish, whilst any means are within his reach of helping himself.' [26] The social attractions of club membership were not properly understood. Pubs for example, were held responsible for 'idle and bad habits' and '...the vicious principles, the intemperate practices and the sad and disastrous failures of many Ale-House and other Clubs.' [27]

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[25] Young p.7.
[26] *South Gloucestershire Friendly Society. Tract...* op. cit.
[27] BRL:B7439 *South Gloucestershire Friendly Society 7th Report*; for other attacks on friendly societies: by the temperance movement see *Bristol Temperance Herald* July 1837, which echoes the SGFS critique; and by James Johnson *Transactions of the Corporation of the Poor* (Bristol, 1826) pp.45-7 where the ex-Governor of the Corporation of the Poor damned benefit

By the 1820s then, it is possible to discern two distinct conceptions of friendly societies. Ordinary members saw the benefit clubs partly as economic necessity and partly as social nexus, with popular control of the club and its officers by the assembled membership. The philanthropic elite saw them instead as edifying examples of individualistic thrift marred by poor management and drunkenness, which under beneficent direction might not only reduce poverty but also be morally improving.

A political clash at national level in 1828 threw these two notions of the benefit club into sharp relief. Courtenay's Friendly Societies Bill in 1828 sought to strengthen the powers of society trustees (who had to be householders, following an act of 1819) by giving them the right to appoint the treasurer. Certification would henceforth depend on the approval of rules by actuaries of the National Debt Commissioners, while local magistrates were to be empowered to adjudicate in disputed cases. [28] These moves were regarded by the clubs as an assault on their independence and a campaign to overturn them was spearheaded by a committee of London friendly society delegates. The attitude of the Bristol clubs towards the bill mirrored their rejection of hierarchical societies like the PMFS and the SGFS. A petition was presented to the House of Commons in June 1828 from the 'Officers and Members of Benefit Societies, in the City of Bristol' calling for the bill to be rejected. [29] In the event the bill was dropped , to be replaced in 1829 by an Act that was actually drafted by the London committee. [30] A national Registrar was appointed, although his regulatory powers over enrolment were circumscribed; the involvement of the local magistracy was reduced to automatic confirmation for a set fee. No more was heard of the proposed sweeping powers for trustees.

Historians of the relationship between friendly societies and the state have described the provision for central registration in the 1829 Act as a landmark in the progress of Government

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societies as little more than drinking clubs, with more than 6d. out of every 2s saved each month going on beer, and with the added risk of the publican dipping into the funds.

28 I.Prothero *Artisans and Politics in Early Nineteenth Century London* (Chatham, 1979), p.234, and ch.12 passim.

29 *House of Commons Journal* 2nd June 1828.

30 10 Geo. IV, c.56.

encouragement for self-help. [31] Viewed from a local perspective the significance was rather different. The threat of legislation which would have supported the magistracy and philanthropic elite in their project of establishing hierarchical benefit clubs had been seen off, principally through the power of collective action under artisan leadership.

c) Evolving contexts for mutuality

Annuitant societies, building societies and trustee savings banks all developed out of the friendly society world, and took advantage of the legislative benefits to extend their functions to a wider market. Savings banks were more obviously the progeny of philanthropic encouragement to self-help, but although in theory their customers were restricted to the genuinely poor, in practice they also had a far broader clientele. In all three cases voluntary organisations which originally claimed to nurture working class mutuality evolved towards commercial institutions utilised by the public at large, and not a putative target group of the thrifty poor.

Annuitant societies were those offering only a lump sum payable at death or a pension for widow and children. They were regularly formed over the period, and although there were only six established up to 1860, their maximum numbers were much higher than was usual for a benefit club: 2,200 in the case of the Bristol Equitable for example. [32] While their regulations adopted much the same format as the standard benefit club there were some important differences, such as the absence of sickness benefit, and the operation of a graded contribution system. Payments and benefits could far exceed the standard friendly society sums, with subscriptions to the General Annuitant Society ranging from £ 1-8s to £ 7 p.a., which aimed to provide pensions of £10 to £50 p.a. after seven years. The insistence that trustees must be 'substantial Householders assessed to the Relief of the Poor in a sum not less than Fifty pounds', and the graded contributions, which at the top end were far in excess of what could be afforded from the average working wage, indicate that members of Bristol's business community initiated these institutions. [33]

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31 P.H.J.H.Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England* op. cit., pp.177-8; B.Supple 'Legislation and Virtue: An Essay on Working Class Self-Help and the State in the Early Nineteenth Century' in N.McKendrick ed., *Historical Perspectives, Studies in English Thought and Society, in Honour of J.H.Plumb* (London, 1974)op. cit., p.229.

32 BRO FS 2; for the size of benefit clubs see Appendix 4.

33 BRO FS 6, 20, 31.

Their marketing was also quite different from that of the standard friendly society, which, as far as can be discerned, relied simply on word of mouth and social connections. [34] Annuitant societies advertised in the local press, where the style and position of the notice signalled similarities with voluntary charities; regular use of the word 'respectable', and in one case the name 'Bristol Philanthropic Society', carefully conveyed to the reader the distinction between these groups and the world of the box clubs. [35] Alignment with charities was also achieved through the form of the meeting. Philanthropic Society members in 1803 convened at the Mulberry Tree Tavern on a Thursday morning for the taking of initial subscriptions, then accompanied their president, the Mayor, to St James Church for a sermon by the evangelical Anglican vicar Thomas Biddulph. Timing, place and procedure was all directly resonant of the eighteenth century County and Colston societies. [36]

Fly-posting of hand-bills was another means of reaching a wider market (*Fig. 7.1*, over) is an example of this method, dating probably from the second or third decade of the nineteenth century. [37] The name 'Friendly Union' was pitched at the benefit club market and the rider 'enrolled agreeable to act of parliament' confirmed the association (here the procedure of registration was used to imply respectability and financial soundness in a way that was hardly warranted). Inducements were offered in the form of the three months free entry, while the small print of the 'extracts from articles' ommitted to indicate the regular subscription fee, which the customer would only discover when the bait had been taken. Overt commercialism and the broad market pitch across the age, gender and income spectrum reveals the Bristol Friendly Union as the next stage of annuitant society development. The characteristics of the charities had been shed in favour of those of the commercial life assurance market.

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34 As suggested by the addresses and occupations of members of Court City of Bristol A.O.F., see *Minute Book* (1840).

35 For the Bristol Philanthropic Society and the Bristol Annuitant Society, see *Bristol Journal* 29/1/1803, 2/4/1803, 23/4/1803, 18/6/1803, 15/10/1803.

36 For a Bristol Annuitant Society procession attended by 'Gentleman' and the Band of Bristol Volunteers, FFBJ 24/6/1797, 1/7/1797,

37 BRL B 15136.

Figure 7.1 n.d.

LOSE NO TIME!

Entrance Free for Three Months!!

BRISTOL FRIENDLY

Union Society,

(ENROLLED AGREEABLE TO ACT OF PARLIAMENT)

An Excellent Provision in Case of Death;

INSTITUTED IN AUGUST, 1816,

For the Benefit of Subscribers, their Widows, Widowers, & Nominees,

HELD AT

MR. JOHN STOCKWELL's,

No. 20, NARROW WINE STREET, BRISTOL.

EXTRACTS FROM ARTICLES:

The above Society, at present, consists of 560 members, and by the Articles to *consist* of 2500 members of both sexes, comprising *Three Classes*, under the following regulations, viz. the First Class to contain *one thousand* members, between the ages of ten and forty years;—the Second Class *nine hundred* members between the ages of ten and fifty years;—and the Third Class *six hundred* members between the ages of ten and sixty years.

When the Society arrives to its full number of members,

On the Death of any Member or Nominee, belonging to the First Class, the Sum of

One Hundred Pounds will be paid to the Survivor;

For the Second Class, Fifty Pounds;

For the Third Class, Thirty Pounds.

In the event of the death of any member or nominee, previous to the Society being full, every member shall contribute towards the payment of his or her funeral money according to the respective class to which such deceased member or nominee belonged, viz. If the deceased member or nominee belonged *to the First Class*, then the members of the First Class shall pay thirteen pence, the members of the Second Class seven pence, and the members of the Third Class five pence. If the deceased member or nominee belonged to the *Second Class*, then the members of the First Class to pay seven pence, the members of the Second Class seven pence, and the members of the Third Class five pence. And if the deceased member or nominee belonged to the *Third Class*, then the members of each Class to pay five pence towards such funeral money.

PERSONS WISHING TO BECOME MEMBERS

Of either Class, may be enrolled by applying at the Society-House, on the first Wednesday in every Month; or the first Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, after each Quarter Day.

The above Society has a Stock in Hand, and pays the Claims for Deceased Members or Nominees immediately upon Demand.

A SIGHT OF THE ARTICLES MAY BE HAD ON APPLICATION AT THE SOCIETY-HOUSE, AS ABOVE.

☞ *Members of any Benefit Society may be enrolled in the above.*

PRINTED BY T. LANE, REDCLIFF STREET, BRISTOL.

Building societies also demonstrate the process of change from mutualist to commercial organisation, although it is worth emphasizing at the outset that knowledge of their early history (from c.1775) is not extensive, as although a few registered under Rose's Friendly Society Act of 1793, certification did not generally occur until the Building Societies Act in 1836. However, commentators are agreed that they emanated from workers' mutuality rather than elite philanthropy. [38] With subscriptions of around 10s per month they were the preserve of the well-paid artisan and tradesman, but they also adopted standard friendly society procedures, such as the system of fining, the pub base with beer allowance and annual feast, and the strong-box held by the landlord. [39] Initially building societies operated on a 'terminating' principle, where a club of limited size would wind up when subscriptions had paid off the cost of the advances plus interest. By the mid-1840s the first permanent societies appeared, facilitating the security of larger membership, the efficiency of a speedier offer of a loan and the attraction of investing in the fund without the commitment to taking up an advance. Bristol experienced a rapid growth of building societies from the 1840s, shown in *Table 7.1* (over). [40]

Why should the mid 1840s have been the watershed for local building society formations ? At a national level actuarial interest had begun to generate a literature which convincingly demonstrated how the permanent societies could reliably offer mortgages and loans and at the same time operate a savings fund yielding higher interest than trustee savings banks. [41] Once Bristol businessmen and professionals began to follow these trends and take on trusteeships and directorships then emulation did the rest, as the Bristol Permanent Benefit Building Society acknowledged in its articles, which

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38 This is the conclusion reached by Seymour Price *Building Societies, their Origin and History* (Cambridge, 1958) ch.II, and broadly endorsed by E.J.Cleary *The Building Society Movement* (London, 1965), though in the 1779 Dudley Building Society Price has discovered hierarchical involvement, while Cleary shows the participation of 'small traders and manufacturers' as well as the importance of property developers, pp.9-10, 16-17.

39 Ibid., pp.17-19.

40 Research into Bristol's early building society movement has been limited to the region's main institution, the Bristol, West of England and South Wales Permanent Building Society, now the Bristol & West: C.J.Lowe *The Building Society Movement: a Half Century Record with special reference to the Bristol, West of England and South Wales Permanent Building Society* (Bristol, 1901); Charles Harvey 'Old Traditions, New Departures: the Later History of the Bristol & West Building Society' in C.Harvey and J.Press *Studies in the Business History of Bristol* (Bristol, 1988) - a volume sponsored by the Bristol & West. The failure of historians to turn up any record of the prototype small-scale terminating society in the local press of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century may be indicative of their non-existence in the city, though the profusion of societies in the North, Midlands and London does make this rather improbable.

41 S.Price op. cit., ch.VIII; E.J.Cleary op. cit., pp.47-9.

justified its foundation by the '..great increase in Benefit Building Societies ... and the extent to which the middle and industrious classes have engaged in them.' [42]

Table 7.1 Early Bristol Building Societies

Name	Founded
Bristol New Building Society and Savings Fund	1846
Bristol and Western Counties Building and Investment Society	1846
Bristol, Bath & West of England Benefit Building & Investment Society	1846
Bristol Benefit Building and Investment Society	1847
£60 Building and Savings Fund	1847*
Bristol Tradesmens Benefit Building Society	1848
Bristol Permanent Benefit Building Society	1850
Bristol, West of England and South Wales Permanent Building Society	1850
Bristol Equitable Building Society	1850
Bristol and District Permanent Economic Benefit Building and Investment Society	1853
Bristol Union Benefit Building Society	1855
Third Bristol Benefit Society	1859
Standard Building Society	1865
Bristol General Permanent Building Society	1865
Fourth Bristol Permanent Building Society	1869
Mutual Aid Benefit Building Society	1869

* *date of earliest known deed*

Source: PRO FS 6/68/1,3,4,5,6,7,9; BRO 22936, 27644/2, 39204/R/1a; C.J.Lowe *The Building Society Movement: a Half Century Record with special reference to the Bristol, West of England and South Wales Permanent Building Society* (Bristol, 1901), p.96.

Was it the case that building societies, as the last quotation hints, now rivalled benefit clubs for the savings of the less well off ? This is a vexed question, since the societies themselves were anxious to project themselves as facilities for workers, since this was more likely to convince the government to retain their exemption from stamp duty. Hence, for example, the rhetoric of the Bristol and District Permanent Economic Benefit Building and Investment Society (hereafter BDPE) in its preliminary prospectus:

[42] PRO FS6/68/9.

'This Society offers no small inducement to the Industrious Classes generally, to lay by their savings, however small...' and to '...place within the reach of every man, however humble his sphere in life, the means of attaining the independent position of being the Proprietor of the Dwelling he inhabits.' [43]

One way of testing these aspirations is to consider the cost of subscribing to a share account as a saver, bearing in mind the evidence already advanced on local wage levels. [44] The standard subscription rate of 10s monthly was far in excess of the usual benefit club rate (usually 1s 6d./2s) though some building societies took steps to make share accounts available to the smaller saver. The Bristol New Building Society and Savings Fund offered monthly half shares at 5s, and the BDPE members could subscribe to 1/5 shares at 2s. At a time when Odd Fellow membership might cost 7d a week, it is possible to say that some building societies were within the reach of the skilled worker. [45]

Nonetheless, the claim to be providing the humble labourer with means to attain independent owner-occupation was blatant hyperbole. The survival of the first BDPE Minute Book allows an insight into the housing loans policy through a study of the 28 applications for advances made at the start of its operations, between January 1854 and June 1855. *Table 7.2 a)* (over) sets out the value of applications made, revealing that provision of cheap housing was not a priority. In *Table 7.2 b)* (over) the question is approached through an examination of the background of those applying for advances.

Of the 12 untraceables, six were applying for mortgages of £200+, one already had another loan, suggesting he was a speculative builder, and only two of the remaining five had advances under £100. Putting the results of both tables together, of the 14 applications below £200, one was from a BDPE director, two were from estate agents, one from the removal man and four from builders. Thus only three or four advances could conceivably have been made to putative working class

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[43] BRO 24759 (1).
[44] See above, Chapter 6 d).
[45] Ibid.; FS6/68/3, Odd Fellows: PRO FS2 626 IOOFMU Royal Caledonia Lodge

owner/occupiers, but these may equally well have been builders and speculators, unlisted in the trade directory.

Table 7.2 a) Value of applications for mortgage advances to Bristol & District Permanent Economic Benefit Building & Investment Society, 1854-Jun. 1855.

Value	*No. applications*
>£100	4
£100-£199	10
£200-£299	4
£300-£399	5
£400-£499	4
<£500	1

Table 7.2 b) Status and occupation of loan applicants

Status/occupation	*Number*
BDPE director	4
House/estate agent	5
Architect/surveyor	1
Building trades	5
Furniture remover	1
Tradesman	2
Private income*	1
Untraceable	12

* ie. address but no job listed

Source: Matthews's Bristol Directories 1854, 1855

Building societies liked to project themselves as altruistic concerns. In his evidence to the 1871 Select Committee investigating Friendly and Benefit Building Societies, solicitor Henry Isaac Brown was keen to convey the impression that his involvement with the Bristol Equitable Permanent Building Society was essentially a philanthropic effort on behalf of the 'working population'. His own practice had suffered from time spent at the building society, '..yet I look upon my society as a

child of my own, and I would always rather lose my own money than the society's money.' [46] However, in the light of the BDPE evidence, it does seem improbable that those who became trustees and directors were motivated purely by selflessness. These voluntarists stood to gain firstly from their share accounts, and secondly from their influence in the allocation of loans. Directors were typically required to hold shares, two (£240) in the case of the Bristol Building and Investment Society, one (£120) unadvanced in the BDPE, and according to Brown these yielded an interest rate of 5% to 7.5% depending on the society. [47] They might also have a professional interest in housing: the BDPE board of 1854-5 contained one house/land agent and one plumber/lead-pipe manufacturer. Of these, the estate agent Samuel Capper used his position to gain an advance of £480 for two houses and shops in Picton Street, while Mr Tardrew, a linen draper, was advanced £1200 for 11 houses in Kingsdown. Tardrew also secured an advance of £600 for his brother to mortgage property in Bideford. [48]

So, like the annuitant societies, building societies had emerged from the pub-based world of mutuality under the aegis of paternalistic legislation. [49] Despite the rhetoric that surrounded them, and the fact that share accounts were within the financial reach of some skilled labourers, it is hard to disagree with Paul Johnson's verdict for the post-1870 period, that they cannot properly '...be described as working-class financial institutions'. [50] Nor is it appropriate to see building societies as heirs to a philanthropic tradition.

The Bristol Savings Bank presents a similar pattern of development, in that it was nurtured by mutualist legislation but ended up as a partly commercial affair, although its philanthropic elements are less ambiguous than those of the building societies. Twenty years after its inception as part of the PMFS programme it was still possible to observe the strong presence of the same philanthropic elite in the Bank's management. [51] In its presentation the Savings Bank was careful not to associate

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46 PP 1871 xxv *1st Report of the Commission appointed to Inquire into Friendly and Benefit Building Societies* p.61.
47 Ibid., p.60.
48 FS6/68/1; BRO 24759 (1); BRO 39204/M/1(a); the other BDPE directors were three surgeons, four gentlemen, a merchant, a shipowner, an engineer and nine tradesmen.
49 P.H.J.H.Gosden *Self-Help* op. cit., pp.147-151.
50 Paul Johnson *Saving and Spending, The Working-class Economy in Britain 1870-1939* (Oxford, 1985), p.124.
51 Comparison of names, based on an 1830s savings book, BRO 9492/17 b), and the 1814 *State of the PMFS* shows that of the eight trustees six had been PMFS subscribers or were family members thereof, and of the 39 strong committee 14 had been subscribers and seven were relatives. Continuity also featured in the list of volunteers who actually staffed the bank in its

itself with mutuality or financial institutions: the 1841 Trade Directory listed as a charity 'The Bristol Provident Society, or Savings Bank ... instituted with a view to induce persons whose means are scanty to lay aside a small sum weekly for clothing, & co.' [52] Deposits could be made either at the Bank itself, or, using the philanthropic 'network', at four different school-rooms, (one Lancastrian, one Moravian, two untraceable). Listed alongside was the 'Bristol Loan Fund, For the promotion of economy among the labouring classes', which also operated out of the Bank. While this representation placed it in the long tradition of those endowed charities that offered loans to 'young tradesman of honest character', in reality the Fund was an interest-free credit scheme to tide the 'deserving poor' over periods of crisis. [53]

The cloak of charity disguised a tension which ran through the Savings Bank movement both locally and nationally. Like annuitant and building societies they were fostered by legislative paternalism which took its cue from government approaches to friendly societies. George Rose's Savings Bank Act in 1817 had provided legal recognition and various privileges, in particular the security of investment with the National Debt Commissioners at a highly advantageous interest rate. [54] This inevitably gave rise to the fear that Savings Banks would attract the wrong sort of investor - not the genuine poor but the middle class saver drawn by the favourable terms. Two means were adopted to counter this temptation. A limit was placed on the size of deposit, though this was set fairly high at £ 200, and a strict classification of depositors' occupations was introduced, to restrict the right of banking to the labouring classes and the low paid middling sort. [55] Trustees, directors and managers were forbidden to invest in the bank themselves, and charities and friendly societies were encouraged to deposit up to £ 300.

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opening hours, of whom six out of 21 were either ex-PMFS subscribers or relatives. The only two female members, Susanna Morgan and Elizabeth Rowe, had been in the PMFS hierarchy, as Secretary and committee member respectively.

52 *Matthews's Directory - 1841* p.309, under the head of 'Institutions for Charitable Purposes'.

53 See Manchee p.143, and for this type of endowed charity, W.K.Jordan, *Philanthropy in England 1480-1660* (London, 1959) pp.266-7; *3rd. Annual Report of PMFS* (1815) p.15, *Bristol Journal* 1/1/1814.

54 H.Oliver Horne *A History of Savings Banks* (Oxford, 1947) ch. v; B.Supple op. cit., 239-241; P.H.J.H.Gosden *Self-Help* op. cit., pp.213-4.

55 BRO 9492/17 b): deposits had to be not less than one shilling at a time, and not more than £ 30 per annum, exclusive of compound interest, with a ceiling of £ 200 (deposit + interest) per account; permitted occupations included revenue officers, clergymen, dissenting ministers and teachers earning £ 150 or less a year.

How successful were these regulations in encouraging the poor towards thrift while deterring the middle class interloper ? *Table 7.3* suggests that while the avowed intentions of the Savings Bank were met, its facilities were also exploited by those who might equally well have used the private sector. With many small deposit holders the bank could claim to be reaching the labouring classes, and in holding the accounts of probably the majority of Bristol's charities and friendly societies was remaining true to original PMFS ideals. [56] However, the large number and value of accounts in excess of £ 50 indicate the strong presence of the wealthier saver. Clearly the occupational restrictions were not watertight, with categories like 'small tradesman' open to interpretation, and no allowance being made for the advancement which 'journeymen' or 'mechanics' might make in the course of their careers.

Table 7.3 Structure of deposits in Bristol Savings Bank, 1836, 1846, 1858.

Balance	*No. Depositers*			*Total value*		
	1836	**1846**	**1858**	**1836**	**1846**	**1858**
a) Individuals:						
> £ 20	2,961	5,007	7,166	£ 21,989	£ 34,990	£ 49,341
£ 20 - £ 50	1,863	2,508	3,207	£ 57,604	£ 78,414	£ 99,717
£ 50 - £ 100	962	1,342	1,595	£ 66,822	£ 94,273	£ 111,203
£ 100 - £150	374	459	543	£ 45,253	£ 55,189	£ 65,843
£ 150 - £ 200	226	334	393	£ 38,661	£ 57,554	£ 65,591
< £ 200	89	36	14	£ 19,758	£ 7,782	£ 2,905
b) Charities:						
	30	62	111	£ 2,555	£ 4,728	£ 8,066
c) Friendly Societies:						
	61	79	94	£ 7,965	£ 14,348	£ 18,979
Total				£ 260,607	£ 347,280	£ 421,645

Source: Annual Reports: *Bristol Gazette* 11/2/1836, *FFBJ* 9/5/1846, *Bristol Mercury* 30/1/1858.

While the Savings Bank could therefore claim to be faithful to its commitment to the low-income saver, commercial realities meant that, just as with annuitant and building societies, friendly society

[56] The proportion of depositors under £20 rose from 45% in 1836 to 55% in 1858, though the value of their deposits accounted for only 8.4%, rising to 12%.

legislation encouraged institutions with a more general appeal. The point is borne out by surviving savings books which illustrate use of the Bank for both small savings and short-term capital accumulation for business. Coachmaker John Green Crayman made a monthly investment of sums ranging from £ 5 to £ 20, withdrawing the full amount every eighteen months when his investment cycle would recommence. In contrast Hubert Craymer Monks was a genuine small investor depositing sums of £ 1 - £ 7 at monthly and bi-monthly intervals, allowing the account to build over several years to £ 73. [57]

One way in which the Savings Bank could claim to rival friendly societies was by becoming gradually more accomodating to the female saver. In the 1830s a married woman had been unable to deposit in her own name, and could not draw out money from her husband's account without power of attorney. By the 1850s, married women could deposit and withdraw in their own names (though the husband only had to provide written notice, not power of attorney, if he wished to withdraw on the account). The rule books of the 1880s categorically stated that deposits made by married women were 'deemed to be the separate property of such women'. [58]

To summarise, with some 5,000 investors of £50 or less by 1836, the Bristol Savings Bank had emerged as a clear challenge to friendly societies, and appealed to workers across the income range. While it lacked the social and cultural attractions of the benefit club it was also untainted by the political and social opprobrium attached to hierarchical institutions like the PMFS and the SGFS, even though there was an overlap of personnel. The security of monies banked by the trustees with the National Debt Commission provided a favourable alternative to the risks of the benefit club. Also, in contrast to the predominantly male world of the friendly society, changing attitudes to married women's property made the Bank a more attractive option for the female saver.

Brief mention must also be made of the co-operative movement, the last and initially weakest off-spring of the mutualist parent to appear in the mid-century. Instead of owing its existence to

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[57] BRO 9492/17 b); BRO 4492 (17) h) Savings Book, 1885-1888.

[58] Ibid.; BRO 24759 (53), *Rules for the Management of the Bristol Savings Bank* (1857); it is most likely that these reforms were prompted not by internal enlightenment, but by government legislation (7&8 Vic, c.83, s.12, 33&34 Vic, c.93, s.2) and female relatives of depositors were still discriminated against in arrangements for the distribution of the accounts of those dying intestate. Nonetheless it was an advance for married women; for general background see Mary Lyndon Shanley *Feminism, Marriage, and the Law in Victorian England, 1850-1895* (London, 1989).

commercial or philanthropic interests, co-operation was the brainchild of radical and Chartist activists. An early effort was the Bristolian Bread Association in 1829 involving James Acland and John Cossens (organiser of Henry Hunt's 1816 mass platform in Bristol). The committee fell out, and a pamphlet war over the management of the group ensued, centring on doubts over Acland's accounting. Nonetheless the Bread and Flour Concern was in existence throughout the 1830's. [59]

Subsequent attempts in the mid-nineteenth century were characterised by failure. First to lodge its rules, in 1840, with the Registrar of Friendly Societies was the Co-operative Store run by the Bristol Working Men's Association; signatories included the two leading Chartists, Felix Simeon and Moses Clements. [60] This was open to women on the same basis as men, an initial share cost ten shillings, the monthly subscription was 6d and the annual interest, at 5%, was paid on capital with the surplus divided in proportion to purchases. To prevent the association being used solely for investment a fining system was introduced to ensure expenditure of at least 1s per week in the store, and the rules prevented share capital from being withdrawn. [61] Though still running in 1847, when a rule change was registered, the venture did not last. Probably the degree of commitment of funds was off-putting, when set against the flexibility of the Savings Bank, while the price-savings on food, in Bristol's cosmopolitan market-place, may not have been sufficient to divert a family's surplus that would otherwise go to annuities, or death and sickness benefit.

Inability to attract sufficient members also dogged the Bristol Industrial Co-operative Society, which folded within two years of its inception in 1859. [62] Nor did the Bristol Industrial and Provident Society (1860), with more flexible rules on withdrawal, retain its investors. After a period of expansion in the first decade, by 1874 capital withdrawals were so extensive that profits were

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59 *Bristolian* November 1829 passim.; for Acland see Graham Bush op. cit., pp.55-58; for Cossens, Henry Hunt op. cit., Vol.3, pp.397-9; the pamphlet war: BRL B8213 *The Bristolia* B8214 *The Discoverer*; an oral account of the Co-operative Flour and Bread Store on Broad Weir is mentioned in E.Jackson *A Study in Democracy: being an Account of the Rise and Progress of Industrial Co-operation in Bristol* (Manchester, 1911), p.30, though it is not certain whether this was a later institution; subscriptions of the Bread and Flour Concern to the Dispensary can be traced in the Bristol Dispensary Annual Reports, BRL B7891, eg. 1830, 5 guineas, 1835 and 1840, 3 guineas.

60 For Clements, see Chapter 4, note 71.

61 E.Jackson op. cit., pp.27-30; capital could only be transferred, or offered for sale with first option to buy going to the Committee; Felix Simeon: see eg. *Bristol Mercury* 16/1/1841.

62 E.Jackson op. cit., pp.30-2.

completely eroded. With liabilities dangerously exceeding assets the confidence of the co-operators withered and the Society dissolved. [63]

Although the closing years of the century finally saw the co-operative movement gather force in Bristol and its suburbs, the failure of these early attempts to take root is striking. Most of the reasons are general and national, in that government interest was slow to alight on co-operation, and it was only in the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts of 1862 that the all-important limited liability for members was introduced. At the institutional level it was not until the late 1840s that the efforts of the Rochdale Pioneers demonstrated unequivocably the viability of linking dividends to store purchases, but although this method was emulated in Bristol, there was none of the activity and excitement that marked the simultaneous proliferation of building societies. [64] Unlike the other savings institutions discussed here the co-operative ideal had emerged in an explicitly dissenting political context. [65] It was genuinely democratic and mutualist, offering neither commercial interest nor 'hierarchical' charity relationship.

Conclusion

The glue which bonded eighteenth century associationalism was a powerful sense of fellowship and reciprocal responsibility. These ideals were retained by friendly societies in the nineteenth century, but did not figure significantly in the voluntary charities, which were now represented much more explicitly as vehicles for middle class intervention in the lives of the poor. One such intervention was the attempted co-option of the benefit club format, but despite their superiority as investment institutions these initiatives were doomed in the city because they could not compete with the social and cultural attractions of the friendly society world. The Savings Bank, annuitant societies, building societies, and co-operatives all profited from legislation designed to foster working class providence, but only the former was significant to the poorer investor.

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63 Ibid., pp.32-36; PRO FS8/2/34.

64 P.H.J.H.Gosden *Self-Help* op. cit., pp.182-195.

65 It's also interesting to note that Bristol's Owenite Hall of Science (1840) was registered as a friendly society, and one of its four trustees, Henry Morrish, was a key figure in the world of the Bristol mutuality, as a printer of society rulebooks and as the secretary of several benefit clubs, including at least two in 1840, and six at the time of the Northcote Commission in the 1870s: PRO FS1 561; E.Jackson op. cit., pp.18-24; for hostile reactions to Owen's inaugural visit, *Bristol Journal* 3/10/1840, *Bristol Mercury* 9/1/1841; Morrish: PRO FS1 588, 587; Young pp.61-2.

Section II

Conclusion

Friendly societies played an important part in meeting the medical and life assurance needs of Bristolians in the period and provided a vivid focus for the social lives of male workers. This case study is of particular importance as it places the clubs in the long run perspective of civic institutions, offering a corrective to accounts which view them from the potentially anachronistic stand-points of 'self-help', 'the market' or 'Victorianism'. Consideration of the societies' quinquennial returns raised doubts about their actuarial viability in the later nineteenth century, but their membership levels, and the rejection of the 'elite-led' projects, demonstrate that they remained attractive.

However, although numbers are impossible to establish firmly it seems that little over a third of households enjoyed coverage, and even then women and children had no personal medical insurance. Middle class citizens were in general excluded socially and culturally from the friendly society world. [1] They addressed ill health with commercial medicine and the exigencies of old age through the inheritance strategies of the 'property-cycle'. [2] Commercial life assurance was also increasingly available: trade directory listings in the city grew from 13 in 1820, to 44 in 1840, to 65 in 1870. But what of those who could afford neither satisfactory market solutions nor regular benefit club subscriptions - a group which probably accounted for some 40% of Bristolians ? [3]

Other types of mutualist and quasi-mutualist associations did not fill this gap, with the partial exception of the Savings Bank, though it is impossible to tell what proportion of depositors were also friendly society members. Mutuality could therefore only provide a limited answer to the stresses of rapid population growth, and the threats to which environmental degradation and downturns in the trade cycle gave rise. The alternatives were offered by the Poor Law and charity. Endowed charity,

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1 F.M.L.Thompson 'Town and city' in idem. ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 1: Regions and Communities* (Cambridge, 1990) p.64.

2 R.J.Morris 'The Middle Class and the Property Cycle during the Industrial Revolution', T.C.Smout ed. *The Search for Wealth and Stability* (London, 1979).

3 The basis of this is the friendly society coverage of some 40% of families, shown in *Table 6.3*, and the estimate of middle class families constituting 17-20% of the urban population, see Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall *Family Fortunes. Men and women of the English middle class, 1780-1850* (London, 1987) pp.23-4.

as we have seen was too inflexible to meet demands, so it is to the proliferating voluntary and subscriber charities that we must now turn.

Section III

Voluntary societies in 19th century Bristol

Introduction

The previous discussions of endowed charity and mutuality have made considerable reference to voluntary associations, in the case of the former as the alternative mode of benevolence that gradually superseded the charitable trust, and in the latter as the force which challenged but failed to supersede the friendly societies. In this section Bristol's voluntary charities will be brought more fully into view. The scope of the investigation takes in groups which founded and supported institutions like hospitals, asylums, missions and schools, and a plethora of associations which financed some form of philanthropic work such as home-visiting, evangelizing, and support for needy groups - the sick, women in childbirth and so on. It considers philanthropic social action in the broadest terms, also taking in campaign groups, for example those advocating anti-slavery and temperance. Its typical, though not uniform, structure was the internally democratic subscriber association.

The section will begin with a survey of local voluntary societies and institutions in the nineteenth century. Factors which encouraged developments will be identified, ranging from religious affiliation to the role of the medical profession, to provide a general account of the different stages of growth. The second chapter will analyse data susceptible to quantification, such as that relating to meetings, membership and accounts, in order to characterise the structure of the societies and evaluate their impact. Economic evidence will point to some of the shortcomings of philanthropy as a mode of delivering welfare. This will be followed by a chapter that builds upon these findings to assess voluntarism's social meaning, and the forces that underpinned its vitality in this period of history. In particular, the class basis of voluntary charity will be analysed, and its political significance, broadly and narrowly defined, will be brought out.

Chapter 8

Voluntary Charities: the pattern of growth.

There is no clear consensus in the historiography over the periodisation of voluntary society growth, perhaps because the process is conceived as an aspect of the 'making of the middle class'. Modern historians of class who see the era of the French Wars and their aftermath as a crucial moment of class formation can point to a flourishing of associational life from the 1790s. [1] Yet recent work on the post-Restoration middling sorts has revealed much older forms of charitable 'bourgeois collectivism'. So should the emphasis be placed on long run continuities in associational life, as the source of civic values, class identity and support for the embattled urban household ? [2] Or should we characterise the early years of the nineteenth century as a moment of critical change, when paternalistic, face-to-face charity gave way to a benevolence determined by class relations ? [3] Different approaches have also been taken to the later nineteenth century. Did a new and distinct philanthropy emerge after the mid-century, engendered by fresh notions of social citizenship arising from mass urbanisation ? [4] Were there two 'phases' of philanthropy, with a hiatus around the 1830s attributable to the impact of Malthusian thought and its emphasis on more discriminatory giving ? [5] Or should we stress the spasmodic nature of religious enthusiasm: the evangelical fervour of the early nineteenth century, and the revival of the late 1850s/early 1860s ? [6]

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1 R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party The making of the British middle class, Leeds 1820-1850* (Manchester, 1990); Theodore Koditschek *Class Formation and Urban-Industrial Society. Bradford, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, 1990).

2 Jonathan Barry 'Review Article: The Making of the Middle Class?' *Past and Present* no.145, (1995) pp.194-208; idem. 'Introduction' and 'Bourgeois Collectivism ? Urban Association and the Middling Sort' in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks ed. *The Middling Sort of People. Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (London, 1994).

3 Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor in Eighteenth Century Bristol* (Cambridge 1991), ch.6; Theodore Koditschek op. cit., chs.2, 9, 10, 11, 15; M.J.D.Roberts 'Reshaping the Gift Relationship: The London Mendicity Society and the Suppression of Begging in England 1818-1869', *International Review of Social History* xxxvi (1991) pp. 201-231.

4 H.E.Meller *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914* (London, 1976) esp. Introduction, quote p.13, and footnote (123) for her sense of a 'new' philanthropy.

5 John V.Pickstone *Medicine and Industrial Society* (Manchester, 1985), chs. 1-3, 5, 6, suggests an early enthusiasm, a lull in the 1830s when Malthusian notions inhibited the charitable impulse, then a resurgence from the 1850s, driven by medical specialisation, female philanthropy and the propaganda of sanitary reformers.

6 D.J.Carter op. cit.; John L.Duthie 'Philanthropy and Evangelism among Aberdeen Seamen, 1814-1924', *The Scottish Historical Review*, lxiii, 2, 176, (1984), pp.155-173.

The most schematic and influential attempt to impose a coherent pattern on the development of voluntary charity has been set out by R.J.Morris. [7] The period from around 1780 is viewed as a change in trend, as benevolent societies responded to an escalating rate of social and economic transformation, which provided 'the basis for the formation of a middle-class identity', and a means of 'gaining and asserting authority'. Voluntarism in the early nineteenth century therefore helped to overcome political and sectarian division, to weld a unitary middle class consciousness, and to promote the 'organisation of consent' at a time of bitter class relations. The 1850s were another turning point; by this stage the acculturation of the lower middle class had been achieved and the artisan threat neutralised. Henceforth voluntary societies proceeded along different paths, some seeking to reach their goals by aid from the state and others mutating into commercial organisations. [8]

This chapter will test these ideas against the experience of Bristol's voluntary charities. It will give a chronological survey of new formations and the development of existing institutions, based on a dataset of associational life derived from newspapers, trade directories and annual reports. The strengths and limitations of the methodology are discussed in Appendix 6, to which preliminary reference should be made. [9] The origin of subscriber charity is charted briefly in a section on voluntarism before 1790. This is followed by three sections loosely organised around the first three quarters of the nineteenth century, each phase distinguished, it is argued, by particular factors. Certain questions recur in each of the main sections and form the basis of the analysis. Did societies appeal to all sections of the town's elite or were they sectarian ? Why were particular goals and target groups more prominent at some times than at others ? Is it possible to identify a specifically female philanthropy ? What was the contribution of doctors to the vigorous growth of medical charity ? What was the interplay between the voluntary world and social policy formulated by the state ?

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7 R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit.; idem., 'Clubs, societies and associations' in F.M.L.Thompson ed. op. cit.; idem., 'Voluntary Societies and Bristish Urban Elites, 1780-1850:An Analysis', *The Historical Journal*, 26, I (1983) pp.95-118.

8 Ibid., passim., see particularly the diagram p.107.

9 A detailed discussion of the dataset is also included, see pp.319-28.

a) Before c.1790

The previous chapter has made reference to Bristol's eighteenth century associational life in the context of mutualism and only a short supplement will be offered here to trace the emergence of the subscription society. First though, the extent, novelty and significance of voluntarism in this phase needs to be set in the context of changing ideas about the social position of the middle class. Where once it was relatively invisible in the bi-polar model of patrician and plebian society, work on the languages of class, on 'politeness', and on popular politics has now restored the bourgeois to a more central position. [10] The implication of this historiographical shift for understanding charitable association is not yet clear. It may be that the 'English urban renaissance' spawned an essentially emulative public life, which while satisfying the middle-class consumer was modelled on fashionable society. [11] Alternatively we might think in terms of the transformation of existing civic traditions, not so much by the influence of metropolitan urbanity, as by the autonomous and specific wishes of groups of citizens. [12]

This latter analysis can be applied to the question of how the subscription society developed. Associational life still revolved around long established foci, such as the parish and the gild, and flourished at a more informal neighbourhood level, in the taverns and coffee-houses which hosted a range of clubs for discussion, conviviality, shared interests or mutual benefit arrangements. [13] We have seen already that the payment of quarteredge by craft gild members foreshadowed friendly society practice; it is also documented in non-gild contexts, such as a professional association of Bristol lawyers, 1661-1670, in the Artillery Society, a royalist militia, from 1679, in the convivial

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[10] For example P.J.Corfield 'Class by Name and Number in Eighteenth-Century Britain' in P.J.Corfield ed. *Language, History and Class* (Oxford, 1991); Paul Langford *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-83* (Oxford, 1989) esp. ch.3; John Brewer *The Sinews of Power* (London, 1989); Nicholas Rogers *Whigs and Cities. Popular Politics in the Age of Walpole and Pitt* (Oxford, 1989).

[11] P.Borsay *The English Urban Renaissance* (Oxford, 1989); for the assertion that the landed classes led the infirmary movement see Roy Porter 'The gift relation: philanthropy and provincial hospitals in eighteenth-century England' in Lindsay Granshaw and Roy Porter ed. *The Hospital in History* (London, 1989) pp.158-161.

[12] Jonathan Barry 'Bourgeois Collectivism' op. cit., esp. p.87, and idem. 'Provincial Town Culture 1640-1780: Urbane or Civic ?' in A.Wear and J.H.Pittock eds *Interpretation and Cultural History* (Basingstoke, 1991) pp.198-234.

[13] Peter Earle *The Making of the English Middle Class. Business, Society and Family Life in London 1660-1730* (London, 1989) pp.240-250; Peter Clark *Sociability and urbanity: clubs and societies in the eighteenth century city* (Leicester, 1986); John Brewer 'Commercialisation and Politics' in N.McKendrick, J.Brewer, and J.H.Plumb *The Birth of a Consumer Society: the Commercialization of Eighteenth Century England* (London, 1982); G. Munro Smith *A History of the Bristol Royal Infirmary* (Bristol, 1917) pp. 231-4, for discussion, dining and musical societies frequented by medical men: 'The Bear's Cub Club', 'The Catch Club', 'The Half-Pint Club', 'The Nagg's Head Club'.

club St Stephen's Ringers from 1693, and in the Society for the Reformation of Manners, 1700-5. [14] The raising of a 'one-off'subscription to tackle an emergency or a favoured cause was already a well established practice for members of the Corporation or particular congregations. [15] There were, therefore, 'indigenous' precursors.

Evolution from late medieval to modern forms of association was more obvious in the County societies, whose mutualist aspects were mentioned above. [16] Dating from 1658, these employed recognisable ceremonial forms of sermon, procession and feast, presumably because a familiar ritual pattern attracted participants, and signified a claim to membership of the civic community that appealed to those born outside the city. The novel features were the practices of fundraising through the sale of tickets for the dinner and by collection at the service, and the use of the annual profit to relieve those who might hitherto have been eligible only for aid from endowments. [17] A similar approach was adopted by the Colston commemorative associations, starting in 1726 with the Colston Society, which celebrated the great philanthropist's birthday with bell-ringing, a procession to the Cathedral with the Colston scholars for a sermon, then a dinner and some minor charitable distributions. This 'parent society' spawned three others, the Dolphin in 1749, the Grateful in 1759 and the Anchor in 1768, all of which held dinners at which collections for doles or apprenticeship fees were made. [18] Commitment to an annual charitable gift to a secular association was therefore a long established feature of city life, owing little to emulation of metropolitan society.

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[14] Lawyers; Rose Garden Society, quarteredge 2s6d., discussed in J.Barry 'Cultural Life' op. cit., p.173; militia: BRO 8029/11 *Articles and Orders of the Friendly Society of the Exercisers of Arms*: members paid 2s 6d quarterly and were liable to fines for non-attendance at drill or unbecoming conduct; see also Jonathan Barry 'The Politics of Religion in Restoration Bristol' Tim Harris, Paul Seaward and Mark Goldie ed. *The Politics of Religion in Restoration England* (Oxford, 1990) p.170; St Stephen's Ringers, 1693, club charge 5s p.a., see H.E.Roslyn *History of the Ancient Society of St.Stephen's Ringers* (Bristol, 1928); Society for the Reformation of Manners: BRL 10162 fos. 2-3, reproduced in Jonathan Barry and Kenneth Morgan ed. *Reformation and Revival in Eighteenth Century Bristol* Bristol Record Society Publications Vol XLV (Bristol, 1994) p.17; see also Jonathan Barry 'The parish in civic life' in ed. S.J.Wright op. cit, p.169 ; this was of course a national movement, see T.C.Curtis and W.A..Speck 'The Societies of the Reformation of Manners: a case study in the theory and practice of moral reform' *Literature and History* 3, (1976); Mary E.Fissell 'Charity Universal ? Institutions and Moral Reform in Eighteenth Century Bristol' in Lee Davison, Tim Hitchcock, Tim Keirn, Robert B.Shoemaker , *Stilling the Grumbling Hive: The Response to Social and Economic Problems in England 1689-1750* (Stroud, 1992) pp. 127-129, 134-5; D.Owen op. cit., p.20-1; .

[15] John Latimer *Annals ... Eighteenth Century* op. cit., pp.87-8 subscription for the poor, 1711, and p.153 for St Mary Redcliffe parish subscription for commemorative bell-ringing in honour of Colston's birthday; BRO SF/F1/1 Quaker collection in response to a 'breife'.

[16] See above, Chapter 7 a).

[17] J.Barry 'Cultural Life' op. cit., pp.179-181.

[18] Ibid., pp.178-9; John Latimer *Annals ... Eighteenth Century* op. cit., pp.153-4, 280.

The influence of national trends is more obvious in the case of institutions funded by subscription, starting with the charity school movement in the early eighteenth century. [19] The inspiration of the SPCK lay behind Rev. Arthur Bedford's initiative in Temple, where parishioners' subscriptions established boys and girls' schools in 1711 and 1713, and a year later a school opened serving St Michaels and St Augustine, apparently a joint venture. Subscription alone was uncertain, so the financing of the Temple schools was also underpinned by a large annuity from Edward Colston; likewise the Protestant Dissenters (later Unitarians) at Lewin's Mead had built their school with voluntary subscriptions in 1722, then provided an endowment for future income. [20]

The Infirmary provides another example of an enduring subscriber institution - although, as we shall see in the following chapter, it too had various other sources of income. Opened in 1737 it again reflected national trends, following the establishment of a provincial hospital in Winchester and preceding those in York and Exeter. Subscription was therefore attractive as a measure of civic pride, and was encouraged by sermons reminding listeners of religious obligation and the practical advantages for social relations; furthermore it offered those fundamental ingredients of the developing public sphere, openness and accountability. [21] Mary Fissell has demonstrated the extent to which it also served local needs in developing a new means of tackling poverty, and providing an arena of civic power in which dissenters might participate. [22]

This last point highlights a central ambiguity of eighteenth century associationalism. Analysis of language and behaviour indicates adherence to a range of values embraced by the middle class: moderation, a sense of the responsibilities of the free and independent citizen, a respect for precedence legitimating membership of the civic community, and so on. [23] Yet alongside this integrating function they also offered a means of expressing political or religious difference, indeed

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19 For the charity school movement, see M.G.Jones *The Charity School Movement in the XVIII Century* (Cambridge, 1938); also Derek Robson *Some Aspects of Education in Cheshire in the Eighteenth Century* (1966) ch.II and the more sceptical approach of Joan Simon 'Was there a Charity School Movement? The Leicestershire evidence' in Brian Simon ed. *Education in Leicestershire 1640-1940* (Leicester, 1968).

20 Manchee I pp.202-5; John Latimer *Annals ... Eighteenth Century* op. cit., p.80; Mary E.Fissell 'Charity Universal' op. cit., p.138..

21 For the uniform nature of the provincial hospital movement Roy Porter 'The gift relation' in Lindsay Granshaw and Roy Porter ed. op. cit., pp.149-157; Paul Langford op. cit., pp.134-8; accountability: Jurgen Habermas 'The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)' *New German Critique* 3 (1974) p.52.

22 Mary E. Fissell *Patients* op. cit., ch.4; idem 'Charity Universal'.

23 Jonathan Barry 'Bourgeois Collectivism' op. cit., pp.95-107; John Brewer 'Commercialisation and Politics' op. cit., pp.217-30.

voluntary associations were already the seedbed of popular political culture. [24] Because charitable activity was identified with civic solidarity it provided an ideal means for groups to lay claim to be legitimate representatives of urban identity and popular feeling. Hence the overt party attachments of the Colston societies (Dolphin: Tory, Anchor: Whig) and the recurrent Tory/Anglican bias of the Gloucestershire Society. [25] Hence also the factional infighting which dogged Colston's charity schools. [26] The early role of the Infirmary is less clear, with the initial prominence of Quakers on the governing body and subscription lists hinting at dissenting ambitions to secure an outlet for social action untainted by the sectarian animosities which fractured the Corporation of the Poor and the charity schools. By the 1770s however acrimony between dissenters and Anglicans had arisen here too, initially over the question of a new chaplain. [27]

The spread of subscription charity was an eighteenth century phenomenon driven both by evolution of existing urban structures to satisfy new demands, and by emulation of national trends. Middling sorts engaged in voluntary charity as a means of easing social integration and expressing their values. However, the inclusiveness and scope for subscriber democracy in these associations provided a natural platform for the assertion of political and religious identity.

b) c.1790-c.1820: the swelling river of charity

> 'When we consider the unexampled exertions that are now making in every part of the kingdom, in behalf of the lower classes of the community, the present may be denominated the age of philanthropic benevolence. In times past, we have been accustomed to form an idea of benevolence as a rivulet flowing through the several societies of Christians; dividing and sub-dividing into small, and thence more diminutive streams; but, of later years, we have seen this rivulet spread wider and wider, until, like the waters of the Nile, it has swollen and broken down the

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[24] G.Munro Smith op. cit., pp.237, describes the politics of tavern clubs, such as the Jacobite 'Nagg's Head' and the high Tory 'Half-Pint'; for electoral politics and party clubs (the Loyal, the White Lion (or Stedfast) Societies and the Union Club) see N.Rogers op. cit., pp.267-303; see also John Brewer 'Commercialisation and Politics' op. cit.

[25] Jonathan Barry 'Cultural Life' op. cit., pp.173-181.

[26] John Latimer *Annals ... Eighteenth Century* op. cit., p. 86; Mary E. Fissell 'Charity Universal' op. cit., p.138;.

[27] Ibid., p.139; idem. *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., p.89-90; G.Munro Smith op. cit., pp. 34-38;

ordinary boundaries, diffusing its fertilizing deluge over the whole country; yea, it has rendered the nation fruitful in liberal charity.' [28]

The mood of change captured in 1814 by Bristol's adult school proponent, Thomas Pole, has also preoccupied historians of nineteenth century voluntary societies. This period was distinguished by a spate of new formations, in line with Morris's findings elsewhere. [29]. On the one hand it was marked by a new trend to high profile societies in which the town's leading citizens participated regardless of sectional or party allegiance, while on the other the traditional identification of charities with a particular church or dissenting group continued. There is therefore scope for attributing the efflorescence of voluntarism both to a unitary class project - notably in the innovatory approaches to poverty - and to more discrete religious aims - manifested in education and the Evangelical societies. These were not the only factors however. Women became active in the voluntary arena, albeit usually in a subsidiary role. The career aspirations of doctors were furthered by the establishment of specialist charities. The state's impact was oblique, with censure of the endowed charities starting to gather pace locally and nationally and a new vigour brought to institutional interventions with criminals and lunatics. Philanthropists mirrored this activity, building 'asylums' for marginal groups like the blind, the orphaned and the prostitute.

What was the nature of these prominent, non-sectarian societies in which different sections of Bristol's elite could combine to pursue social goals ? The first notable example was the Society for the Prevention and Suppression of Vice (1803), and although movements for the reformation of manners had appeared before in Bristol as elsewhere, this was directly inspired by Evangelical activity in London. [30] Another such group drawing support from across the political and religious spectrum was the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society (BABS) formed 1810, which saw tract distribution

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[28] Thomas Pole *A History of the Origin and Progress of Adult Schools* (1816)., p.99; Pole was a prominent Quaker, so may well have been predisposed to detect ecumenical Christian benevolence.

[29] Though Barry has argued this might be partly an illusion, contingent upon the appearance of voluntary societies in the surviving sources, see Jonathan Barry 'Review Article' op. cit. pp.199-200; see also Appendix 6.

[30] Vice Society: *FFBJ* 1/1/1803, 8/1/1803, 15/1/1803; for its prosecutions of brothel-keepers, *Bristol Gazette* 21/8/1806, FFBJ 26/1/1811, BRO 4579 (2); membership: Anglicans: Revs. Biddulph, Collinson, New; Dissenters: Revs. Estlin, Rowe, Ryland; for the parent society, see Ford K.Brown *Fathers of the Victorians. The Age of Wilberforce* (Cambridge, 1961) pp.84, 238, 434-6; and see above note 14.

as a route to 'civic' and 'moral' reform. [31] It had distributed a total of 81,660 Bibles and Testaments by 1823, at a time when, according to the 1821 census, there were 21,466 families in the city and suburbs. [32] Foreign missions could also follow the pattern of cross-faith establishment. The Bristol Missionary Society (1812) initially rejoiced in 'the undisguised harmony of Churchmen and Dissenters', collecting nearly £600 from churches and chapels in 1814. [33]

The other prime concern of the non-partisan societies was to establish fresh approaches to the problem of poverty. The Samaritan Society (1807) was an early attempt to rationalise the provision of aid through a committee made up of the Treasurers of other charities. [34] Careful scrutiny of those soliciting charity, coupled with the project of engendering self-sufficiency guided the Samaritans, as it did the Prudent Man's Friend Society (1812), whose thrift schemes were dealt with above. [35] Begging was to be addressed through a ticketing system, whereby PMFS subscribers received redeemable tickets to distribute in lieu of money when solicited for alms; refusal to take the ticket 'is a strong presumptive proof that his case will not bear investigation.' [36] Rewards were offered for the conviction and removal of vagrants to their parish of settlement. [37] Fund-raising on behalf of others was the activity of the Reynolds Commemoration Society (1816), set up after the death of the eminent Quaker philanthropist. It exhorted Bristolians to act '...in their collective capacity...' to sustain Reynolds' example of benevolence. [38] The National Benevolent Institution for the Relief of Distressed Persons in the Middle Ranks of Life, provided doles and medical aid for the

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31 *FFBJ* 5/2/1803; the Bristol group was an auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, formed 1804, see James Moulton Roe *The British and Foreign Bible Society 1905-1954* (London 1965) 'Introduction The First Hundred Years: 1804-1904'; BRL B3951 8th. Report of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society.

32 Ibid., and see 9th., 11th. and, for 1823 figures, 14th. Reports, for subsidiary organisation and distribution.

33 *FFBJ* 17/9/1814.

34 BRL B4620-B4644 *Bristol Samaritan Society. Its Rules and an Address to the Public* (1807); this prefigured the rationalising aims of the later Charity Organisation Society, see Kathleen Woodroofe *From Charity to Social Work in England anf the United States* (London, 1962) ch. II; help might take the form of doles for patients released from the Infirmary but unable to find work, aid for those without a parish settlement in obtaining out-relief, and the provision of trusses for hernia sufferers.

35 See above, Chapter 7 b); also Martin Gorsky 'Experiments in Poor Relief: Bristol 1816-1817' *The Local Historian* 25, 1 (1995) pp.17-30.

36 Similar contemporary initiatives were the Bath Monmouth Street Society, the Spitalfields Soup Society and the London Mendicity Society, see D.Owen *English Philanthropy* (London, 1965) pp.109-113; Phillip McCann 'Popular education, socialization and social control: Spitalfields 1812-1824' in Phillip McCann ed. *Popular Education and Socialization in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1977) pp.13-19; the Parliamentary Mendicity Committee sat 1815-16.

37 In 1813 750 beggars were relieved through tickets, and 289 'vagrants' removed: *FFBJ* 1/1/1814.

38 *Bristol Mercury* 9/12/1816; donations were divided amongst three charities, the Stranger's Friend Society, the Samaritan Society, and the Friend in Need Society, a home-visiting organisation associated with the Whitfieldite Tabernacle, see eg. *FFBJ* 9/3/1811.

more respectable aged and infirm who had fallen on hard times - teachers, governesses, clerks, tradesmen or professionals. [39]

The broad spread in these societies of leaders and subscribers from all sections of the elite suggest a shared purpose of Bristol's middle class, expressed through voluntarism. In poor relief the common theme was investigation to establish that applicants were genuinely deserving, and then to couple assistance with a proselytising or moralising intervention. In the religious groups sectarian animosities were replaced by a common evangelical ardour. How are these developments to be explained ?

Studies of the West Yorkshire textile towns, Leeds and Bradford, have laid particular stress on the early decades of the nineteenth century as the crucial moment in the moulding of a unitary middle class consciousness, manifested in the voluntary societies. [40] Although a 'middle-class formation' approach might usefully account for the unusual degree of non-sectarian participation in the groups mentioned, Bristol does not lend itself easily to the economic model on which the thesis is based. The emergent generation of textile masters who transformed the northern factory towns had no obvious equivalent. [41] Instead the capitalist ethic of early nineteenth century Bristol was set firmly in the mould of its mercantile past. [42] Rather than representing a fresh ideology of liberal individualism borne by new men, these associations were led by the established elite and supported by prominent dissenters. The PMFS for instance had as its Vice-Presidents Thomas Daniel, the leading Tory-Anglican, Charles Harford, master of the Merchant Venturers, Reverend Dr Randolph, Prebendary of Bristol Cathedral, and the Quaker Richard Reynolds; pre-eminent Unitarians included Lambert Schimmelpenning, trustee, and John and Alfred Estlin, committee members. Among the 'members for life' of the Samaritan Society were Quakers Thomas Bonville, Edward Ash and Joseph and Richard Reynolds, alongside Anglicans Thomas Daniel, John Scandrett Harford, Edward

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39 BRL: B1534 *National Benevolent Institution* pp. 12, 15.

40 R.J.Morris, see note 7 above; Theodore Koditschek op. cit, chs.9, 10, 11; see Introduction p.5.

41 For a critique of Koditschek's conceptual approach see Pat Hudson's review of *Class Formation* in *The English Historical Review* cccxxxvii (April, 1993) pp.410-11; for a wide-ranging attempt to reassert the importance of the pre-1800 'middling sort', Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks ed. *The Middling Sort of People* op. cit.; also Jonathan Barry 'Review Article' op. cit.

42 B.W.E.Alford 'The economic development of Bristol in the nineteenth century: an enigma ?' P.McGrath and J.Cannon ed. *Essays in Bristol and Gloucestershire History* (Bristol, 1976) pp.262-7.

Protheroe and Richard Vaughan. Anglicans and Old Dissenters were most visible in the leadership, but other non-conformists were eager subscribers; in the PMFS for instance Reverends Cowan, Grinfield, and Rowe. [43]

If the new associationalism was not an epiphenomenon of changing social structure it seems most likely that it was stimulated by the impact of Evangelicalism against the background of war. The surge of metropolitan voluntarism inspired by 'vital religion' is well known, as is the leading role of Quakers alongside Anglicans. Moreover such groups as the BABS, the Vice Society, the Society for the Relief of Poor Pious County Clergymen (1820s) and the Church Missionary Society were auxiliaries to, or inspired by, those established by the Evangelical leadership. [44] The appeal of these initiatives reached beyond Bristol's Anglican elect partly because church/chapel hostilities in the late eighteenth century were already muted by a common pietism, and partly because of the prevailing political truce. [45] The Corporation of the period contained several Unitarians, both Whig and Tory, some of whom served as Mayor, while national electoral politics were conducted amicably between 1790 and 1812. [46] War also strengthened social solidarity, at least within the middle class, not only generating related voluntary activities, but also creating a sense of insecurity and impending doom to which philanthropic effort offered an antidote. [47] Thus calls for moral reform were made under a perceived threat of 'ruin and destruction' and warnings that 'Corrupt Morals are a sure presage of the downfall of a state'. [48] Lastly, the war had created external pressures that

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[43] BRL 9180-1, *State of the Prudent Man's Friend Society for the year 1814* (Bristol 1814); *3rd. Annual Report of the Prudent Man's Friend Society* (Bristol 1815); BRL B4620-B4644 *Bristol Samaritan Society, Its Rules and an Address to the Public* (1807); sources for religious affiliation include Graham Bush Bristol and its Municipal Government 1820-1851 (Bristol, 1976), Appendix 4, Matthews Trade Directory, BRO 39461/F/4b), Unitarian Subscription book (from which Schimmelpenning withdrew in 1815) and BRO SF/R3/3 list of members of Bristol Society of Friends Monthly Meeting.

[44] Ford K.Brown op. cit., p.244, ch.9.

[45] Pietism: Jonathan Barry 'The parish in civic life: Bristol and its churches 1640-1750' in S.J.Wright *Parish, Church and People* (London, 1988) pp.161-2; idem., 'Piety and the Patient: Medicine and religion in eighteenth century Bristol', Roy Porter ed. *Patients and Practitioners. Lay Perceptions of Medicine in Pre-Industrial Society* (Cambridge, 1985).

[46] Unitarian mayors: Levi Ames (1789), Joseph Edye (1802), Michael Castle (1813), see Graham Bush op. cit.The Whig/Tory division of the two seats was only contested in 1790, 1796 and 1812, see A.B.Beaven *Bristol Lists* (Bristol, 1899) pp.170-1; electoral rowdyism was a feature of 1807, when Henry Hunt first entered Bristol politics, see John Latimer *Annals...Nineteenth Century* pp. 29-30.

[47] For female wartime voluntarism, Linda Colley *Britons. Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Yale, 1992) pp.260-2.

[48] *FFBJ* 14/1/1797, 15/4/1797; see also V.Kiernan 'Evangelicalism and the French Revolution' *Past and Present* 1 (1952) pp.44-56.

required a response; these were reflected in the stress on statutory poor relief mechanisms, with an overcrowded workhouse, escalating numbers of out-paupers, and visible vagrancy. [49]

Alongside the non-sectarian ventures were others specifically associated with urban sub-groups. The eighteenth century County societies (Gloucestershire, Somersetshire etc.) still flourished. [50] The Clergy Society (1692) was a high profile charity under the patronage of the Anglican elite. [51] Party affiliation continued to influence the Colston societies although the Grateful (1758) remained explicitly neutral. [52] Funds were expended on the payment of annuities to the elderly, and the apprenticing of poor boys, while the Grateful Society retained a particular commitment to mothers in childbirth. [53] Various local doctors were prominent members of these, especially the Tory Dolphin society, though status and politics probably overshadowed medical philanthropy as the prime concern here. [54] Sectarian identity was also overt in the Stranger's Friend Society (1786) whose members were Wesleyan Methodists, though the pledge of the society to treat all '..without distinction of sect or party' ensured that its subscription list contained both Anglicans and members of other dissenting sects. [55]

While these societies reflected the nature of eighteenth century associationalism, it was the new wave of educational subscription charities which ensured the continuity of sectarianism into the nineteenth. In addition to schools funded by subscription, it was typical for them to be financed by endowments managed by the Corporation, independent bodies of trustees or parishes. [56] By the

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[49] Overcrowding: E.E.Butcher *Bristol Corporation of the Poor, 1696-1898* (Bristol, 1972) p.12; out-poor numbers rose, for example, from 1,496 in 1772, to 3,032 in 1802, to 6,582 in 1820: see *Reports from the Committees of the House of Commons vol. x Provisions; Poor; 1774-1802*: 1787 *Further Appendix to the Report from the Committee on Certain Returns relative to the State of the Poor, and to Charitable Donations, & c.*, p.599, and J.B.Kington *A Burgess's Letters* (Bristol, 1836) p.311; vagrancy:E.E.Butcher ed. *Bristol Corporation of the Poor, Selected Records 1696-1834* (Bristol, 1932) pp.29-30, 134, 153.

[50] See also above Chapter7 a).

[51] See above, Chapter 7, note 8, and *Bristol Mercury* 13/9/1819.

[52] For the sustained, and quite substantial subscriptions to these, see *Table 9.2* below.

[53] See above, Chapter 7, note 11; in 1814 the Anchor relieved 160 lying-in women, while in the same year the Grateful boasted that since its inception it had aided 6,092 such women, all of whom had been visited; in 1857-8 the Anchor helped 69 women and the Grateful 558, while in 1904 the latter made grants to some 1,100 mothers, see *FFBJ* 5/11/1814; *Bristol Mercury* 6/11/1858; J.W.Arrowsmith op. cit., p.111..

[54] G.Munro Smith op. cit., pp. 83, 123, 126, 128, 170, 171, 183, 192, 310.

[55] BRL B4048 *Report of the Strangers Friend Society 1826* p.6, the target group was initially those confined to their homes by sickness, by the 1820s this had grown to include '..the friendless and afflicted stranger - the widow and fatherless child who are destitute of parochial aid..'; in 1825/6, 7,438 home visits led to 5,911 cases of relief, either of clothing, bedding, medical help or money.

[56] For a parish endowed school, see BRO P/Tem/Kb 1 *Minutes and Accounts of Temple Blue Girls School*; for education in 18th c. Bristol see J.Barry 'The Cultural Life of Bristol, 1640-1775', Oxford, D.Phil., (1985) ch.2, and Manchee, passim; for the charity school movement in general, M.G.Jones *The Charity School Movement in the XVIII Century* (Cambridge, 1938), for Bristol schools, p.360.

1790s old traditions and new developments were combined by the Benevolent Society of St James and St Paul (1789) which provided education to parish children from voluntary contributions. [57] The next stage of development was driven by the Sunday School movement. [58] Surviving records give the firm impression that dissenters played the leading role, and in particular William Smith, sexton of the Methodist King St. Chapel, who was spurred into action in 1804 by his volunteer Sunday visiting on behalf of the Stranger's Friend Society. [59] The Quakers' experience was similar, with two enthusiasts inspired to raise funds from the more well-to-do, such as Richard Reynolds, and start a school, initially in the Almshouse itself. [60] The general pattern of lay activists from the philanthropic world acting through dissenting congregations was replicated in the growth of the Adult School movement. Again the prime mover was William Smith, who this time used a newly established proselytising charity, the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society, to provide support and a subscription base for his plans. [61] Though Anglican effort has left fewer traces it is not likely that it was absent, particularly since two of the Sunday school movement's chief propagandists, Hannah and Martha More, lived only a short way from the city and had extensive links with the Bristol elite. [62]

By the closing years of the Napoleonic Wars trends in educational charity set the tone for a future in which sectarian concerns were much more prevalent. Adult and Sunday School development had led towards the formalisation of educational charities in societies, which could

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57 *FFBJ* 28/5/1803, *Bristol Gazette* 19/5/1806, for their annual service and procession of school-children.

58 W.Matthews *The New History, Survey and Description of the City and Suburbs of Bristol* (1794) referred to a Church of England school in St James, and vaguely noted 'Sunday-schools in most of the other parishes'; BRL B10398 John S.Broad *A History of the Origins and Progress of the Sunday Schools in the City of Bristol and its Vicinity under the Patronage of the Methodist Sunday School Society* (Bristol, 1816) pp. 59-61 claimed that the oldest was in fact the Congregationalist school of the Tabernacle chapel, started 1801-2; for the claim that Bristol had a Sunday School in the early eighteenth century, Thomas W.Laqueur *Religion and Respectability, Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture* (London, 1976) p. 24.

59 John S.Broad op. cit., pp.10-24; this inspired the formation of the Methodist Sunday School Society, which by the end of 1815 it funded seventeen schools, through which 10,593 children passed since 1804.

60 BRO SF/A10/3b) A.Naish, J.S.Fry, W.Sturge *Some Particulars Concerning the Establishment and Early History of the First-Day Schools conducted by the Society of Friends in Bristol* (1860).

61 Thomas Pole op. cit., p.7, this led to the formation of the Bristol Society for Promoting the Education of Adults, pp. 11-14; the 'Address', by Pole, a Quaker doctor, pp.14-20, was an important text in the national spread of this type of education.

62 The pre-eminent Bristol philanthropist, banker John Scandrett Harford of Blaise Castle was apparently the model for Coelebs in More's eponymous novel, see Bryan Little *The History of Barley Wood* (1978) p.13; Martha More *Mendip Annals* (London 1859) ed. Arthur Roberts, describes the schools and contains various other anecdotes; see also Annette M.B.Meakin *Hannah More: a Biographical Study* (London, 1911) chs. xxi, xxv; Mary Alden Hopkins *Hannah More and her Circle* (New York 1947) chs.iii, iv, (early life) xvi-xx (Sunday schools); St. George school subscription, including the Mores, *FFBJ* 1/7/1797; T.W.Laqueur op. cit., pp.75-6; Bristol University Library *Hannah More, Blagdon Controversy*, was a well publicised dispute concerning the rights of Evangelical lay teachers to pray extemporaneously in schools, a notion which alarmed conservative Anglicans, which the Mores defended..

provide a steady source of subscription and a coherent framework of aims and rules on which expansion could be based. Bristol Diocesan Society, formed in 1813 '..for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church', may well have been activated partly in response to the contemporaneous efforts by non-conformists in adult education. [63] At the same time the Bristol Royal Lancastrian Free Schools established a boys' and a girls' school, run on a similar principle to the poor relief and medical charities. An annual half guinea subscription provided one recommendation for a place in the school, while the yearly open day provided the opportunity for patrons to relish the 'gratifying spectacle' of the children going through their lessons. [64] It seems then that if sectarian feeling could be sunk in the cause of tract distribution and poor relief, it was quickly aroused at the prospect of young minds exposed to Anglican, or non-sectarian, teaching. Possibly tempers were heightened because personal intervention of the donors was built in to the structure. An anonymous painting of the St James Benevolent School c.1810 (*Fig. 8.1* over) shows a well-dressed lady visitor looking on as the girls sew and one of the pupils reads to the schoolmistress; all is order and decorum before the benevolent gaze.

If some Evangelical initiatives encouraged non-partisan involvement, it was more usual for the proliferating religious charities to proselytize on behalf of a particular church. Nationally there were clear antecedents to the Anglican evangelising societies in the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (1698), and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (1701). [65] Methodism had arisen from the world of pietist voluntary societies in the 1730s and went on to dominate local tract distribution in the mid-eighteenth century. [66] The leading force in tract distribution may have been the aforementioned BABS, but similar, competing organisations arose

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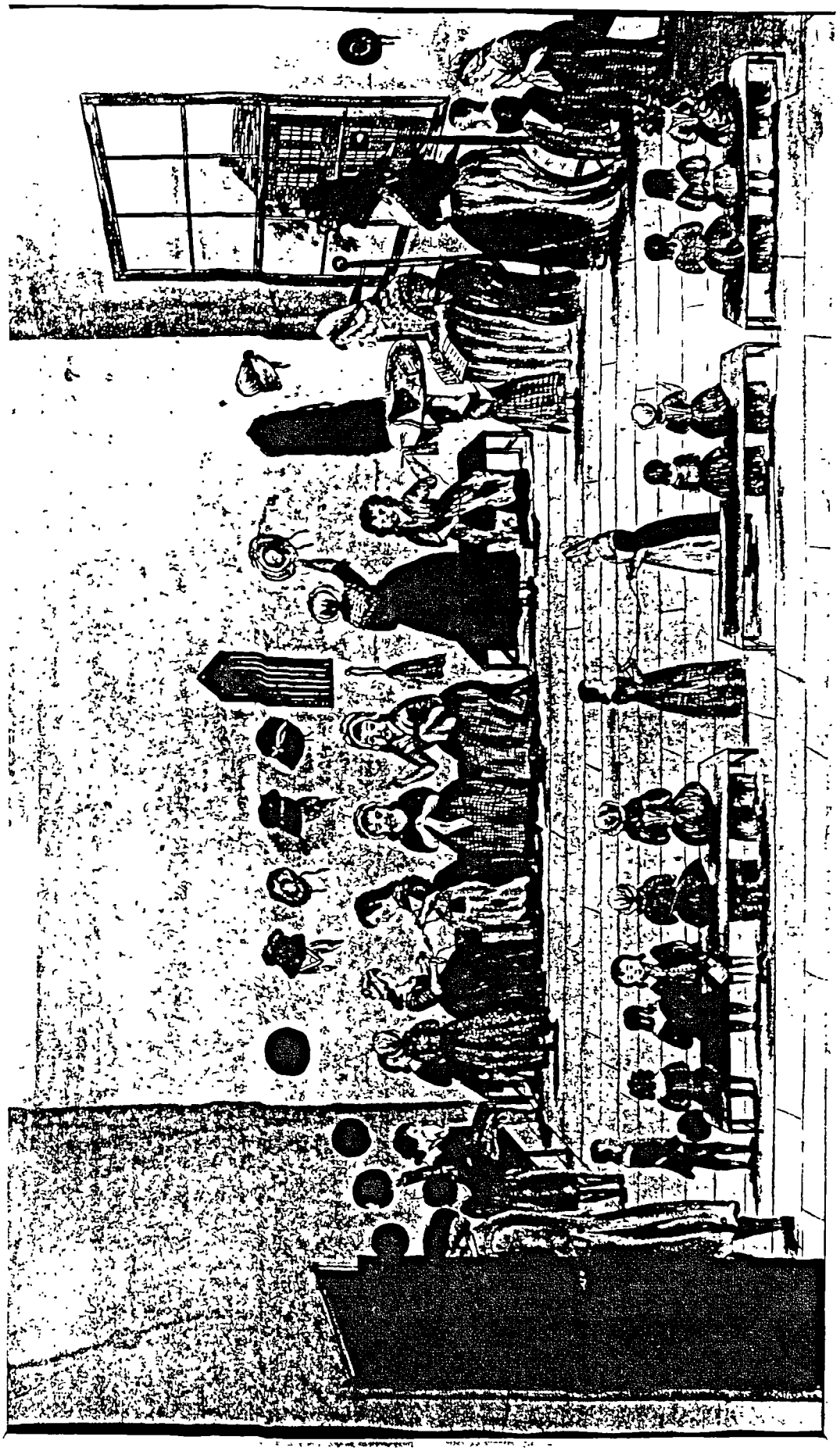
[63] This was the Bristol branch of the National Society, see *FFBJ* 5/2/1814, 12/2/1814; meetings were chaired by the Mayor, while the Committee was led by Evangelical vicars Thomas Biddulph and Fountain Elwyn and prominent Tory Anglicans like James George.

[64] *FFBJ* 28/5/1814, 4/6/1814, 11/6/1814: Thomas Pole, the Quaker adult school promoter, was in the chair, along with such prominent dissenters as Richard Reynolds, and the Unitarian Adrian Moens.

[65] W.K.Lowther Clarke *A History of the S.P.C.K.* (London, 1959); V.E.Neuburg *Popular Literature* (London, 1977) pp.249-264; D.Owen op. cit., pp.20-31; M.G.Jones op. cit., passim;

[66] Societies: John Walsh 'Origins of the Evangelical Revival' in G.V.Bennett & J.D.Walsh ed. *Essays in Modern Church History* (London, 1966) pp.144-8; tracts: Jonathan Barry 'The press and the politics of culture in Bristol 1660-1775' in J.Black and J.Gregory ed. *Culture, Politics and Society in Britain 1660-1800* (Manchester, 1991) pp54-5, who finds that of a total of 948 publications printed in Bristol 1695-1775, 643 had a religious subject matter and of these 455 were Methodist.

Fig. 8.1. Anonymous *The Benevolent School* c.1810, courtesy of Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery



from the various centres of religious life in the city: the diocese, Evangelical Anglicans, and dissenting chapels. [67]

Medical charities flourished in this phase for a variety of reasons. The Bristol Infirmary had already built up a solid base of invested capital and was emboldened to finance a phase of rebuilding commencing in 1784, leading to the opening of two new wings by 1814. [68] Again the civic unity engendered by war was crucial, given the unprecedented (and unsustained) increase in subscriber numbers and income from the 1790s in response to the building appeal. [69] Bristol Dispensary (1775) also extended its capacity, providing home-visits by an apothecary for out-patients and a midwifery service for lying-in women, based on subscriber recommendation. [70] Several new charities specialising in lying-in women emerged: the Female Misericordia (1800), the Bristol (Bridge Street Chapel) Dorcas Society (1809), the St Phillips Dorcas Society (1810s) and the Bristol Lying-In Institution (1820). [71] Here the active role of women in the charitable arena was a key factor, again associated with wartime voluntarism, and with the encouragement to female participation given by the Evangelicals - indeed the patroness of the Lying-In Institution was the Duchess of Beaufort, the Evangelical activist and supporter of Hannah More. [72] Public debate over infanticide motivated the Lying-In Institution, and it may also be that these societies were paler manifestations of the wartime pro-natalism so current on the Continent at the time. [73]

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67 Diocese: SPCK and the Church of England Tract Society; Evangelicals: Bristol Auxiliary of the Prayer Book and Homily Society (1820s), Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews (1815), and two anti-Catholic groups, the Bristol Auxiliary for Promoting the Religious Principles of the Reformation (1820s), and the Bristol and Clifton Association for Promoting the Moral and Religious Improvement of Ireland (1823); Dissenters: Bristol Itinerant Society (1811), the City Mission Society (1826), and the Baptist Itinerant Society.

68 The accounts and rise in patient capacity can be viewed in Appendix 6, while the benefits of expansion are evaluated in Chapter 9.

69 Subscriber numbers rose from 570 in 1792 to a peak of 1,532 in 1814; by the 1830s it was back below 1,000, so expansion needs to be understood in terms not of changing social structure, but of the appeal, which intensified in 1797 as a debt crisis loomed.

70 Annual reports 1791-1855 are collected in BRL B7891 *State of Bristol Dispensary for the Year Ending..;* see also Richard Smith's memoirs BRO 35893 (36) n vol. xiv 232; Mary Fissell op. cit., p.118; C.Bruce-Perry op. cit., pp.7-8; in 1809 increasing demand prompted the opening of a new branch in Bedminster, while the Dispensary itself moved from Stokes Croft to a more central site in Castle Green..

71 The Misericordia loaned clothing, gave small money doles and ran a kitchen to feed nursing mothers, BRO 38463; Dorcas Societies provided loans of sheets and linen, and surgeons/accoucheurs 'in extreme cases', BRO 39399/CD/S/3 (d); the Lying-In Institution sent midwives BRO 35893 (36) n vol xiv; Mary E.Fissell op. cit., p.123-4; .

72 Impact of war, Linda Colley, op. cit., ch. 6; Duchess of Beaufort, Ford K.Brown op. cit., pp.10, 83, 102, 153, 195, 241, 324, 358, 360.

73 Jean Donnison *Midwives and Medical Men. A History of the Struggle for the Control of Childbirth* 2nd. edn. (London, 1988) pp.51-2; Stuart Woolf 'The Societe de Charite Maternelle, 1788-1815' in Jonathan Barry and Colin Jones ed. *Medicine and Charity before the Welfare State* (London, 1991); infanticide: BRO 35893 (36) n vol xiv.

The struggle of doctors to establish a career niche in an overcrowded profession was a major force in the evolution of Bristol medical charities in the period. This consideration applies not only to the dispensaries and those lying-in charities supported by male-midwives/accoucheurs, but more particularly to the emergent specialist hospitals. [74] Entrepeneurial doctors combined an expertise in a particular field with the existing framework of charity, for example Thomas Beddoes' Pneumatic Institute (1793), the Institute for the Cure of Diseases to the Eye among the Poor, founded in 1810 by William Goldwyer, and its rival Dispensary for the Cure of Complaints in the Eye, begun by John B.Estlin in 1812. [75] Career aims were unlikely to have been the sole factor: for example Estlin may have sought to provide for patients who lacked access to the Institute's patronage network, since he was a Unitarian, active in other charities, and self-funded his Dispensary during its first year. [76]

The development of institutional care in this phase demonstrates the influence on philanthropy of the ideals shaping public policy. Bristol's elite followed the 'ideology of the penitentiary' promoted by humanitarian and utilitarian reformers, and had overcome rate-payer objections to building the New Gaol, opened in 1820. [77] Henceforth prisoners received little attention from philanthropists, though the Society for the Relief and Discharge of Persons confined for Small Debts (1774) remained active. [78] By contrast, Bristol, unlike nearby Gloucester, did not take advantage of the 1808 County Asylum Act to finance a public asylum from the rates. Why not ? Firstly because St. Peter's Hospital had already pioneered the separate accomodation of lunatic patients under the

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[74] General: Mary Fissell *Patients* ... op. cit., ch 10; and see John V.Pickstone op. cit., ch.3 for a similar situation in Manchester; dispensaries: Sir Zachary Cope 'The History of the Dispensary Movement' in F.N.L.Poynter ed. *The Evolution of Hospitals in Britain* (London, 1964);.male-midwives: Jean Donnison op. cit., chs.2 & 3, Ornella Moscucci *The Science of Woman. Gynaecology and Gender in England 1800-1929* (Cambridge, 1990) ch.2.

[75] General: Lindsay Granshaw '"Fame and fortune by means of bricks and mortar": the medical profession and specialist hospitals in Britain, 1800-1948' in Lindsay Granshaw and Roy Porter ed. *The Hospital in History* (London, 1989); G.Munro Smith op. cit., pp.159, 318-9, 258-9, 439; Beddoes moved his practice from Hotwells to Broad Quay in 1803, and renamed it the Bristol Preventive Medical Institution, where his experimental use of gases was replaced by more conventional methods; Charles J.G.Saunders *The Bristol Eye Hospital* (Bristol, 1960); for the city's medical and scientific culture as context for such initiatives, Michael Neve 'Science in a commercial city: Bristol 1820-60' Ian Inkster and Jack Morrell ed. *Metropolis and Province: Science in British Culture, 1780-1850* (London, 1983).

[76] Ibid., p.33; DNB p.645; BRO 39461/PM/3 is the Dispensary's Annual Report of 1840: career concerns probably fuelled philanthropy though - in 1810 he had been decisively beaten in elections to the Infirmary surgeoncy.

[77] Ideology: Michael Ignatieff *A Just Measure of Pain. The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850* (London, 1978) ch.3; for the initial impact of John Howard's campaign on the Corporation, John Latimer *Annals.... Eighteenth Century* (Bristol, 1893) p.488; the New Gaol, John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* (Bristol, 1887) 65-8, who points out that the Evangelical philanthropist John S.Harford was a key figure in the campaign

[78] *Bristol Journal* 1/1/1774, 9/2/1774, 16/2/1774, 7/5/1774; *Bristol Gazette* 12/6/1806; 664 were freed in the first 32 years of its existence for the London Society, which inspired Bristol, David Owen op. cit., pp.63-5; for the founder, James Rouquet, A.B.Sackett *James Rouquet and his Part in Early Methodism* Wesley Society History Publication No. 8 (Chester, 1972).

Poor Law, and secondly because the city was already well-served by private asylums, notably Edward Long Fox's Brislington House, which offered 'moral therapy' in the manner of the York Retreat, and took pauper as well as private patients. [79]

If public policy took care of the 'mad' and the 'bad', there were remarkable similarities in the way charity addressed the 'sad'. Approaches to handicap shifted from eighteenth century provision of pensions for the blind to institutionalisation. [80] Local Quakers established the first Blind Asylum (1792) but this rapidly became a favoured cause of the civic establishment and by 1838 subscription income permitted expansion to a prominent spot on Park St. [81] Prostitution was also addressed through a series of institutions where 'fallen women' (or the vulnerable) could receive food and shelter while they learnt to read the Bible and undergo repentance. [82] Rehabilitation was to be achieved through acquisition of literacy skills, the teaching of domestic service, needlework and shoe-making, and ultimately the procuring of a 'situation' with a respectable family. [83] Another such charity enjoying the patronage of the civic elite was the Asylum for Poor Orphan Girls (1795) opened '..to rescue destitute Children...from...Idleness and Vice; to instil...Religion and Morality; and to inure them to habits of Industry and cheerful Obedience,...which may qualify them for acceptable Servants in respectable Families.' [84] The building itself was a set in a rural location on the edge of the city, its house and gardens echoing the idyllic aspect much favoured in contemporary design of lunatic asylums. [85]

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79 PP 1834 xxviii *Appendix to the First Report from the Commissioners on the Poor Laws* p.512A; Kathleen Jones *Lunacy, Law, and Conscience 1744-1845 The Social History of the Care of the Insane* (London, 1955) pp.21-2 (St.Peter's), ch.v; Bristol private asylums: Roy Porter *Mind Forg'd Manacles A history of madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency* (London, 1987) pp.146-7, 165-6, 271-2; Andrew T.Scull *Museums of Madness The Social Organization of Insanity in Nineteenth-Century England* (1979) pp.51, 67, 77, 79, 94, 205, and plate 5; for Brislington's pauper patients, see William Parry-Jones *The Trade in Lunacy: A Study of Private Madhouses in England in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (London, 1972) Tables ix, x, p.327, and discussion pp.50-64.

80 Manchee I pp.104-6, by 1820 Reynold's charity had an annual income of just over £450 which provided doles of £10 each to 43 blind persons; for the national scene, D.Owen op. cit., pp.119-20, 172-3; H.J.Wagg and M.Thomas *A Chronological Survey of Work for the Blind* (London 1932) p.7, 9 and John Latimer *Annals...Eighteenth Century* p.498 for the early Blind Asylum, in a disused meeting house, where blind boys were instructed in plaiting whips, spinning flax, basket-making and stay-lace manufacture.

81 In 1836 Tory Anglicans Thomas Daniel and Charles Ludlow Walker were President and Chairman.

82 Bristol Penitentiary, or Magdalen House (1800), the Refuge House (1814); The Guardian House (1830s).

83 *FFBJ* 9/2/1811; 19/11/1814; Thomas Pole op. cit., pp.52-3; Trade Directory 1841.

84 BRL B9780 *State of the Orphan Asylum for the Year 1821* (see also B9781 for 1826); orphans were a familiar target group, as was the stated objective: Red Maids School foundation deed, Manchee I pp.43-4, had described girls' admission in terms of a bound apprenticeship to a '..grave, painful, and modest woman, of good life and conversation..'

85 BRL B9780; asylum design: Elaine Showalter *The Female Malady Women,Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980* (London, 1987) pp.35-6; the classic exposition is in Samuel Tuke *Description of the Retreat* (York, 1813) ch.III.

All these establishments were predicated upon the discipline of work as the means by which marginal groups could be reintegrated into society, a theme much favoured by prison and madhouse reformers. [86] Was this assertion of the work-ethic a product of class formation, of new men who gloried in 'the moral value of work' ? [87] Perhaps, though the idea of the work-centred institutions long predated the emergence of the 'entrepreneurial ideal', not least in the original design of the Corporation of the Poor, set up to lead inmates to '...civility and a love to their labour'. [88] Nonetheless, it is remarkable that this period saw an intensified delineation and incarceration of the deviant type.

Cultural factors and practical stresses both contributed to this re-assertion of the Puritan work-ethic in an institutional form. [89] Theories of lunacy, after Locke, had evolved to assert the curability of the mad, while penal thought under materialist influence now proposed the function of imprisonment to be not punishment of the body, but reform of the mind. [90] At the same time the balance of power in voluntary hospitals was tipping away from the lay philanthropist, offering a refuge for the needy, to the medical man with his ability to cure the sick. [91] Science provided theoretical vindication for the asylum; it was the challenge of urban poverty which brought it forth. Wartime Bristol hosted an expanding, unsettled population ill-equipped to provide for the indigent within familial structures; large numbers of impoverished vagrants fuelled perceptions of a crime wave which at its most extreme was addressed with an unprecedented resort to transportation. [92] Lastly, to return to the main theme of this section, the war years galvanised a section of the city's

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[86] Ibid., p.156; Andrew T.Scull op. cit., pp.105-7; Michael Ignatieff op. cit., pp.70, 102, 110-11

[87] R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit., p.7; Theodore Koditschek op.cit., pp.198-208, 228-9;

[88] J.Cary *An essay on the State of England in Relation to its Trade* (1695); idem., *An Account of the Proceedings of the Corporation of Bristol* (1700); the quotations are given by Paul Slack *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London 1988) p.196; Cary's efforts were cited by Foucault as evidence that the 'great confinement' of the eighteenth century was directed at those who would not conform to the bourgeois work-ethic, see *Madness and Civilization* (1961) edn. London 1993, pp.51-2; see also Mary E.Fissell 'Charity Universal' op.cit., pp.126-7.

[89] For institutionalisation as a result of 'a mature capitalist market economy' reshaping society, see Andrew T.Scull op. cit., pp.30-48.

[90] Roy Porter *Mind Forg'd Manacles* op. cit., ch.4, pp.279-80; Michael Ignatieff op. cit., pp.66-79;

[91] Lindsay Granshaw op. cit., pp.200-1; Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., ch. 7 (though see ch.10 below).

[92] For the relationship between the asylum and areas of weak familial support structures, see John K.Walton 'Lunacy in the Industrial Revolution: a Study of Asylum Admissions in Lancashire, 1848-1850', *Journal of Social History* 13, (1979) pp.1-22; vagrants: see note 37; transportation: John F.Mackeson *Bristol Transported* (Bristol, 1987) p.37, Table II i.

elite, Evangelicals and Quakers especially, to forms of social action which expressed a compound of self-regard, compassion and fear. [93]

c) c. 1820-c.1860: Fragmentation and specialization

Between the aftermath of war and the mid-century the trend towards high profile, non-partisan association was reversed. New formations were either more closely identified with a particular congregation or had a more tightly defined purpose, while older ones fell into abeyance (eg. the PMFS) or lost their broad appeal (eg. the BABS). [94] A highly politicised sectarian atmosphere pervaded education, anti-slavery and temperance. It also encouraged a distinctly female philanthropy and inspired both small scale missions and one prominent hospital, although professional ambition continued to be a factor influencing medical charity. In this phase the direct role of the state was limited to the meagre education grant, but indirectly the reform of the endowed charities was significant.

Civic debate on poverty had now turned from voluntarist solutions to discussion of the Poor Law, and, indirectly, the endowments. The initiative thus passed to small societies formed by non-conformist churches, such as the Unitarian Working and Visiting Society (1835) and their Domestic Mission (1840).[95] Baptists and Congregationalists were active in the Bristol City Mission (1826) where paid missionaries combined evangelising with aid for the poor, while the Society of Friends formed a Rice Committee (1849), a Mission to Navvies (1861), and finally the New St Mission, where the Quakers converted their original almshouse into a mission building hosting a ragged school, adult school, Sunday school, a 'Bible woman', a cocoa room and soup kitchen. [96] Other charities were organised around one distinct activity, such as the St Mary Redcliffe Soup Society

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93 The motivation of Evangelical philanthropy is explored in more depth in Chapter 10.

94 BABS see below, Chapter 10 c).

95 BRL 7054-9, *Lewins Mead Chapel Working and Visiting Society* 1835-1850: Unitarian women visited the poor families of the area during times of sickness or distress, offered clothing they had made either at reduced price or free, and encouraged Sunday School attendance for the children; BRL 7060-7, *Domestic Mission Society, Annual Reports* 1841-58: their efforts led to the employment of a full time salaried missionary for visiting, preaching, educational, providential and medical aid.

96 Ronald Cleeves *Mission of Mercy* (Bristol, 1979); D.J.Carter *Social and Political Influence of Bristol Churches 1830-1914* unpublished M.Litt. thesis, University of Bristol (1971), ch. 3; see also J.W.Arrowsmith op. cit., p.256: by 1906 2,000 visits a year were made by ten missionaries, while a night's lodging could be obtained by the destitute in return for labour in the Mission's wood yard; BRO SF/A9/3, 4a), 4 b), 5.

(1847), the Clifton Loan Blanket Society (1855), where the parish or suburb rallied cross-sectarian support. [97] Malthusian ideas were prominent, but rather than restraining charitable impulses they existed in an uneasy tension with the imperative of poor relief. [98]

Disability stimulated one final cross-faith effort, the Deaf and Dumb Institute (1841) a civic institution chaired by the Mayor and supported by Anglican and dissenting clergy. Like the asylums it emphasised training for work and its subscribers made an annual 'examination' visit, in the manner of charity school trustees. [99]. Elsewhere sectarianism reasserted itself. It was Evangelical Anglicans who provided the impetus for the Society for the Instruction of the Blind (1830s) and the Society for Embossing and Circulating the Authorised Version of the Bible For the Use of the Blind (1836). [100]

The great importance attached to particular styles of religious instruction in schools meant that educational foundations were closely linked to particular congregations. *Table 8.1* (over) draws on the 1851 census to demonstrate the voluntary (ie. non-endowed) day schools' denominational links. National and British schools educated no more than 56% of charity school children, and a mere 25% of the total number of Bristol scholars, of whom 2,457 attended the eight National schools, as against 2077 in the nine British schools. The Church of England was the dominant religious influence, with 59% of the charity children, in 60% of the schools. One possible reason for the discrepancy is the devotion of Methodist resources to Sunday schools rather than day schools, at least before the foundation of three Wesleyan schools in the 1850s and 1860s. It is also the case that the great expansion of parochial schools coincided with the transformation in the role of the Anglican parish outlined in Chapter 5. Finally, the ratio of boys to girls in voluntary schools was

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97 St Mary Redcliffe Vestry Archive, *Soup Society Minutes, 1854-61*;BRO P/St. A/Soc/1a), b) *Minute Books of Clifton Loan Blanket Society*: again personal intervention was central, subscribers bought tickets of recommendation which they gave to the 'deserving', and provided the benificiary could deposit 2s for the privilege, the blanket, monogrammed with 'CLS', could then be borrowed.

98 Unitarian domestic missionaries for instance observed that '..fluctuation or uncertainty in the means of subsistence' lay at the root of poverty, but at the same time worries over '..the inexpediency of indiscriminate relief' steered their efforts more towards advice and religious succour than material aid, BRO B7061 *3rd. Report of the Domestic Mission Society*, (1842); BRO B7055 *2nd. Report of the Lewins Mead Chapel Working and Visiting Society* (1836).

99 *Bristol Mercury* 19/6/1858, and for examinations, Blind, *FFBJ* 9/5/1846, Deaf, 23/5/1846; training, boys: engraving, printing, bookbinding, carpentry, and shoemaking; girls: washing, ironing, dress-making, and needlework; the influence of Dr Kay in the Institute is suggestive of the impact of medical specialism on this charity.

100 H.J.Wagg and M.Thomas op. cit., pp.11, 19, 28-9; *Bristol Gazette* 18/2/1836, 12/5/1836; a Home Teaching Association for the Blind was formed in 1857 and later merged with the Asylum; noted Evangelicals involved were John S.Harford and Rev. Fountain Elwyn.

57/43, against 50/50 in the private schools recorded in the census. Does this indicate the greater utility of education for boys in the labour market or perhaps the importance of the disciplinary potential of charity schools ? [101]

Table 8.1 Denominational support to Bristol Voluntary Schools, 1851

		Schools	Scholars		
Denominational:			Male	Female	Total
Church of England:-	*National*	8	1464	993	2457
	Others	19	1073	1267	2340
Independents:-	*British*	1	52	96	148
	Others	1	116	135	251
Quakers		2	306	32	338
Unitarians:-	*British*	3	456	233	689
Moravians		1	22	73	95
Roman Catholics		5	259	305	564
Undenominational:-	*British*	5	904	336	1240
Total		45	4652	3470	8122

Source: 1851 *Census of Great Britain. Education Report (England and Wales)*, Summary Tables p.clviii

Certainly the appeals for the voluntary schools had been couched in a language of class management from the first. [102] Thus adult education in this period was transformed from a religious to a secular attempt to influence working class culture, via the establishment of the Mechanics Institute in 1825. [103] Within a few years it offered a programme of classes and lectures, and had its own museum and library, at a cost of 10s per annum subscription. [104] Unfortunately the intent of the promoters was not matched by response of the target public and in 1845 it wound up,

101 For the extent and nature of working class private education in the city, see Philip W.Gardner *The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England* (London, 1984).

102 For example the Quaker Thomas Pole op. cit., p.91 believed one virtue of the Adult School movement was that '..the lower classes have been far less rude and riotous', now refraining from breaking the windows of pacifists (ie. Quakers) during the Napoleonic Wars; the Diocesan Society felt that charity schools promoted '...among the lower orders a salutory disposition of subordination': *FFBJ* 12/2/1814, and see 3/12/1814.

103 Though for its Liberal, non-conformist origins see above Chapter 10 c); general background, J.F.C.Harrison *Learning and Living 1790-1960. A Study of the English Adult Education Movement* (London, 1961), pp. 57-89, 172-184

104 *FFBJ* 25/6/1825; *Matthews's Directory* 1831 p.276; *Bristol Gazette* 3/3/1836, 22/9/1836, 27/10/1836: lectures offered in the autumn of 1836 included: 'Teaching the Blind to Read', 'Mental Calculation', 'Lectures on Chemistry', 'Cotton Manufacture - with Models' and a course by William Herapath on 'Chemistry for Ladies'.

its library and apparatus taken over by the Athenaeum. [105] An editorial in the *Bristol Mercury* looking back in 1858 accounted for this failure thus:

> '..these valuable institutions were never Mechanics Institutions at all. The promoters, with the best intentions, generally exercised a sort of condescending patronage and authority, by which the government of the institution was entirely removed from the ordinary subscribers, whilst another class of persons, of which the young clerk or shopman is a fair representative, commonly usurped the advantages which were originally intended for the working population.' [106]

Expansion of the prominent medical charities was the result not of any marked initiative on the part of subscribers, but of the steady accumulation of fixed capital via single gifts and legacies, which were then invested. Further building work in 1830-2 extended the Bristol Infirmary out-patients admission facilities and enlarged its dispensary, freeing up space for conversion into two new wards in 1841, so that by 1850 the number of beds had risen from around 150 in 1794 to 245, in 'spacious and well-ventilated surroundings'. Further developments in the 1860s were the opening of a Chapel, Museum, three new wards, a new storey to accommodate forty nurses, and the installation of speaking tubes and a telegraphic apparatus. [107] Dispensary patient numbers rose impressively during the first half of the nineteenth century, though within this trend a decrease in the proportion of midwifery cases was the salient feature: 1795: 595 sick, 216 midwifery, 1820: 2,313 sick, 492 midwifery, 1855: 3,587 sick, 247 midwifery. [108]

In part this reflected the vigour of the smaller 'natalist' charities, driven by female philanthropy and medical careerism. The Lying-in Institution aimed at a target group somewhere between the destitute, who might apply to St Peter's Hospital, and the 'worthy poor' sufficiently integrated into the city to call on a subscriber; unlike the Dispensary and the Dorcas Societies, it did not specify that

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105 John Latimer *Annals...Nineteenth Century* p.288.

106 *Bristol Mercury* 20/1/1838; for a similar process in Bradford, Theodore Koditschek op. cit., pp.308-19; two later Bristol ventures were the Free Evening School (1850s) associated with the Domestic Mission, and the Friends First Day School for Men (1857).

107 Ibid., pp.138-145, 148-157, 161-163, 280-282, 333, 335-9; C.Bruce Perry *The Voluntary Medical Institutions of Bristol* (Bristol, 1984); Trade Directories, 1794, 1851.

108 BRL B7891.

only married women might apply. [109] Bristol Dorcas Society, started by the minister of a Congregational Chapel, aimed to aid poor women, through the loan or gift of clothing and bed-linen made by the female committee members at their monthly meetings. [110] The exact degree of medical care given is hard to ascertain: the 1841 report listed five male surgeons and accoucheurs associated with the group, although the accounts for that year make no mention of midwifery fees, other than the four guineas paid to a Mrs Barber for 'attendance', while 324 lying-in women were reported to have been helped. [111] Like the Dispensary the proportion of childbirth cases fell as the century progressed, with the relief of 'poor destitute females' taking precedence.[112] On the one hand this followed the appearance of rival Dorcas Societies through the mid-century. [113] More important though was the impact of commercial medicine. The rise of the man-midwife in the eighteenth century had established obstetrics as an integral part of general practice, ill-paid yet essential to building up a clientele. In the period 1820 to 1850 burgeoning numbers of general practitioners competed to establish themselves as relatively cheap family doctors: the marketplace therefore drew midwifery away from charity.[114] The trend described in Chapter 6 of benefit societies employing qualified doctors from the mid-century may also have been a factor.

Competition for a career niche meant that medical specialisation continued to be a major factor in formations towards the mid-century. A concern for the diseases of children, who were relatively neglected by the Infirmary, led to the creation of the Institute for the Cure of Diseases in Children in

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109 BRO 35893 (36) n vol xiv; BRO P/St BM/X/1. Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power, and the Poor* op. cit., p.123 argues that the Lying-In charity's '..real agenda was the training of midwives', but this may be a misreading of the reference in the minute-book (July 1820) to '..midwives about to be instructed'; 'instructed' might equally denote 'engaged', there being no further reference to training. Perhaps the more distinctive features were the broader target group, its aim of offering '..a protection against so many instances of Infanticide', and the fact that this was the first high profile charity dominated by women: in 1821 there were 66 female subscribers against three men, and management was in the hands of a Ladies Committee.

110 BRO 39399/CD/S/3 (d) Bristol Dorcas Society *Annual Reports* 1841-1870; subscribers were entitled to two recommendations for each ten shillings subscribed, though this had risen to six recommendations for a guinea by 1870, and as in the poor relief societies described above a home visit to assess the case and offer advice preceded aid.

111 It may be that a small charge was levied as in Manchester, see John V.Pickstone op. cit., pp.83, 114, or that attendance was given free to the poor by charitable doctors, see eg. Irvine Loudon *Medical Care and the General Practitioner* (Oxford 1986) p.96; the market rate for a delivery appears to have been half a guinea or a guinea, ibid., pp.94-6, p.247.

112 BRO 39399/CD/S/3 (d) *Annual Reports* 1841-1870: in 1841 there were 324 lying-in cases to 195 poverty, in 1847 273 to 934, and in 1851 190 to 454; after that year poor relief figures were listed simply as 'many hundreds' and childbirth cases fell to 72 in 1870.

113 In the 1830s, the Zion Chapel Dorcas Society, BRO 38603/Z/S/1, and the St Augustine and St. George Dorcas Societies, in the 1840s, the Hope Chapel, in the 1850s the Lodge Street and in the 1860s the Clifton Down, which was in fact the original Lodge St group, renamed and relocated.

114 Irvine Loudon op. cit., ch. 4, esp. p.99, ch.10, pp.275-9.

1821. [115] A Vaccine Institute was started in 1838, again inspired by Estlin, in the 1840s a Dispensary for the Cure of Diseases of the Skin opened in St. James, in the 1850s two Institutions for treating deafness and diseases to the ear were begun, followed in 1860 by a Hospital for Diseases of the Teeth. [116].

This undermining of traditional types of patronage by new attitudes to medical philanthropy and the pressures of commerce was not an even process however, as the founding of the most important new institution of the mid-century, the Bristol General Hospital, demonstrates. Old-style benevolence, particularly from two wealthy Quakers, Joseph Eaton and George Thomas, played an essential part in its establishment (1832) in two houses in Guinea Street, and the building of a much larger site by the Bathurst Basin in 1858. Professional jealousies of non-Infirmary doctors certainly played a part in the debate which preceded its foundation, as did an awareness of patient demand: 233 patients had been turned away from the Infirmary in the first three months of 1830, and the Bristol Hospital and Surgery had been started in May 1830 to meet this need, seeing patients without notes of recommendation. The setting up of the General (which subsumed the Hospital of Surgery) was therefore a reactionary move, reasserting the links between paternal largesse and subscriber power: a two guinea subscription permitted the benefactor to admit two In- and two Out-patients. This can be understood within the context of the years 1831-2, when Bristol's elite was faced with discontent from the lower orders as economic depression, cholera and the Reform agitation coincided, and at the same time experienced an intensification of internal divisions of party and religion. *Not only did the General provide a new forum for softening class antagonism*, it also offered the Liberal Non-conformists an alternative nucleus of civic power. [117]

Religious charities increasingly reflected the cellular religious sub-culture of the city as the pattern of cross-faith establishment gave way to the efforts of individual sects. For example the

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115 For the adult age structure of Infirmary admissions, Mary Fissell 'The "Sick and Drooping Poor" in Eighteenth Century Bristol and its Region', *The Social History of Medicine* 2, 1, (1989) p.46; John V.Pickstone op. cit., pp.113-22 associates concern with childhood disease with the 'new philanthropy' post-1850, so perhaps Bristol was unusual in this respect.

116 The ear establishments were most probably commercial concerns which offered 'advice to the poor gratis' as part of the service, while similarly the Vaccine Institution was based 'at Mr Swaine's surgery': Trade Directories 1841, 1862.

117 G.Munro Smith op. cit., pp.278-280; C.Bruce Perry op. cit., pp.4-5; J.O.Symes *A Short History of the Bristol General Hospital* (Bristol, 1932); the sectional nature of the General will be evidenced more fully in the final chapter.

Bristol Missionary Society had succumbed to sectarianism by the 1830s and was now in the hands of the Independents. [118] New foreign missions were henceforth clearly identified with particular Anglican or dissenting groups. [119] Proselytizing societies in the mid-century concentrated on support services, such as church-building, scripture-reading, and target groups such as seamen. [120] Quaker pacifism was promoted in the Bristol Auxiliary to the London Peace Society (1820) which also featured Wesleyans and Independents. The Anti-War Association (1843) attacked recruiting sergeants for 'decoying young men into public houses, and intoxicating them', and opposed flogging in the army, and colonial expansion: 'trade which could be obtained without conquest was all that was wanted'. [121]

Temperance activity also assumed a sectarian stamp, although its inspirations were various: middle class withdrawal from the alehouse as leisure venue, the pub's association with undesirable social and political attitudes, and the argument that alcohol caused crime and ignorance. [122] Bristol Temperance Society (1830) started fairly moderately, but the growing dominance of Quakers of conviction, like George Thomas, Samuel Capper, Joseph Eaton and Robert Charlton pushed the movement towards total abstinence. [123] The West of England Temperance Association (1837) sought to propagandise more widely with the *Bristol Temperance Herald*, funded by Eaton. Alternative leisure facilities as counter-attractions to the pub were central to the campaign from the start, with events like tea-parties and abstinence Christmas festivals held in public spaces. [124] The

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118 *Bristol Gazette* 15/9/1836, all the chapels at which the annual fund-raising sermons took place were Independents', save one; the Annual Meeting was now no longer held in neutral ground, such as the Guildhall (*FFBJ* 17/9/1814), but at the Castle Green chapel.

119 Anglicans: Bristol Church of England Missionary Association (1813), District Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (1820s); Dissenters: Bristol Auxiliary of the Methodist Missionary Society (1815), the Baptist Missionary Society (1820s) and the United Brethren (Moravians) Mission (1820s).

120 Church-building: *FFBJ* 10/1/1846, 24/10/1846, H.E.Meller op. cit., p.138; Readers: *FFBJ* 14/11/1846; Seamen: Seamen's Friend Society and Bethel Union (1820s), which ran a floating chapel moored at the Grove, the Bristol Channel Seamen's Mission (1835), a Boatmens' and Seamen's Mission (1846), which later became a branch of the Church of England's national Mission to Seamen, Pill Seamen's Mission (1871), the Seamen's and Boatmen's Friend Society (1871) and a branch of the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen (1888).

121 Trade Directory 1831; *FFBJ* 5/9/1846; Anti-War Association: 3/10/1846, Quakers: Joseph Reynolds and Robert Charlton, Wesleyan, C.H.Greenly, Independent, W.D.Wills; for the Peace Society's opposition to the Crimean War, D.Carter 'Social and Political Influences of the Bristol Churches 1830-1914' M.Litt (Bristol 1971) ch.4; and see *Bristol Mercury* 25/2/1854.

122 Brian Harrison *Drink and the Victorians* (London, 1971), pp.166, 186, 233, 244, 256.

123 BRL 24078, a BTS declaration by doctors and surgeons against 'ardent spirits', included the *bon viveur* Richard Smith suggesting concern for more rational use of alcohol rather than austere tee-totalism; for an earlier example of medical advice against drink, Thomas Beddoes *Hints to husbandmen (on intemperate drinking at harvest-time)* (Dublin, 1813); *Bristol Gazette* 16/6/1836, for members' choice of pledges, one foreswearing all liquors and the other permitting moderate beer consumption; by the end of the decade the Bristol Total Abstinence League had emerged.

124 *Bristol Gazette* 11/3/1836, 8/9/1836, *FFBJ* 3/1/1846; these kind of interventions were not, as H.E.Meller op. cit., pp. 123-5; 163-9, suggests, initiated in the 1860s as a *new* response to urban growth.

established form of school outings was co-opted to the cause: the Rural Fete of the Bristol Juvenile Total Abstinence Union of Day and Sunday Schools at the Zoo on Whit Tuesday 1846, attracted 15,000 people to drink tea, coffee, soda and ginger beer, and listen to bands. [125]

Here then was another flowering of middle class religious reformism of the culture of the poor, pioneered in the 1700s by the Society for the Reformation of Manners, and revived in the 1790s by Evangelicals such as the More sisters in their Mendip schools and benefit clubs. [126] Yet it is also important to understand reformism as a minority aspect of middle class culture. [127] And crucially, to the ordinary citizen the hegemonic tussle over the status of the pub in society was perceived to be an intra-class, not an inter-class, issue. Thus a pub landlady prosecuted in 1836 for opening on Sunday during divine service '...considered it necessary to enter into a long and eloquent defence, which she concluded by exclaiming "...if this is what comes by Reform, I say God bless the blues."' [128]

The politicization of philanthropy was perhaps most complete in the case of anti-slavery. This began with Clarkson's visits to the city from 1787, which led in turn to the establishment of an abolitionist committee in 1789. [129] Following abolition a Bristol Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society (1823) was formed to lobby for emancipation and was active up to the campaign against apprenticeship in the 1830s. Marshall's research has demonstrated the centrality of this issue to the division between old and new Whigs. [130] Interest was maintained from 1840 by the Bristol and Clifton Auxiliary Ladies Anti-Slavery Society, first as a forum for discussion and fund-raising for schools in Jamaica, and later lending annual support for the Boston Bazaar and American abolitionism. [131] Garrisonian agitation from 1846 encouraged the Ladies Society to move to a more

125 *FFBJ* 23/5/1846, 6/6/1846.

126 Martha More *Mendip Annals* op. cit., passim., see especially descriptions of feasts and outings, usually preceded by a ferocious address from Hannah More.

127 Hugh Cunningham 'Leisure and Culture' in F.M.L.Thompson ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 2: People and their Environment* (Cambridge, 1990) pp.299-300.

128 *Bristol Gazette* 29/9/1836.

129 John Latimer *Annals ... Eighteenth Century* 473-6; Peter Marshall *The Anti-Slave Trade Movement in Bristol* (Bristol, 1968); the list of participants in an 1814 campaign for a European ban on the slave trade is a roll-call of leading Evangelicals, see *FFBJ* 9/7/1814.

130 BRL 3217 *Proceedings of the Anti-Slavery Meeting held at the Guildhall Bristol on Februrary 2nd. 1826*; BRL 3218 Bristol Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society *Report of Proceedings from the Formation of the Institution to the 31st December, 1830* (Bristol, 1831); Peter Marshall *Bristol and the Abolition of Slavery* (Bristol, 1975); *FFBJ* 9/12/1837.

131 BRL microfilm *Estlin Papers* Reel 5 'Minute Book of the Bristol and Clifton Auxiliary Ladies Anti-Slavery Society, 1840-61'; the group was based at the Independent Bridge St vestry and Broadmead Baptist Church.

fundamentalist condemnation of slave ownership and an endorsement of the female campaigners' right to the public platform, and it eventually disaffiliated itself from its more hide-bound parent society. [132] This nucleus of women later formed the local branch of the Women's Suffrage Society, chaired by Congregationalist minister Urijah Thomas, another active philanthropist. [133]

d) c.1850-c.1880: Proliferation and change

The latter half of the century saw the continuing proliferation of charities associated with a particular congregation or a specialized approach. New target groups, such as young people, animals and juvenile delinquents, came to the fore both in societies and in a fresh burst of institutional establishments. The subscriber system began to give way on the one hand to anonymous benevolence, and on the other to approaches which merged providence and private payment. Again the active role of the state was visible. As we have seen the supervisory function of the Charity Commission and the Registrar of Friendly Societies now firmly underpinned aspects of voluntarism. The extension of publicly funded asylums and reformatories continued the withdrawal of the deviant from private charity, and the 1870 Education Act began the demise of voluntary schooling.

There was no revival of the high-profile, cross-faith poor-relief initiatives. New projects arose from individual churches or offered a distinct service. The 1870s witnessed the arrival of the Broadmead Baptist Church Mission, and the St Luke's Mission Hall, which combined a soup kitchen with ragged school; there was also renewed concern for genteel types fallen on hard times, with the Bristol Benevolent Institution, and a 'Depot for the sale of work by Ladies of limited means'. In the 1880s two groups emerged with a novel solution to poverty, the Bristol Emigration Society, which offered loans and clothing for would-be migrants, and the Canadian Home, '..for the purpose of

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132 *FFBJ* 29/8/1846 for speaking visits from William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass 'the Fugitive Slave', with Unitarian and Quaker support; see also *The Liberator* 16/11/1855, collected in scrapbook 'The Late J.B.Estlin', BRL RLSA B32045 Papers of J.B. and Mary Estlin, Box 3; FFBJ 5/9/1846, 19/9/1846, 10/10/1846, for a 'testimonial' raised for the impressive Douglass and a spate of meetings concerned with the position of some of the churches on the relationship between slave-holding and sin; Howard Temperley *British Anti-Slavery 1833-70* (1972); Clare Midgley *Women against Slavery: the British Campaigns* (London, 1992).

133 Ellen Malos 'Bristol Women in Action, 1839-1919: The right to vote and the need to earn a living', Ian Bild ed. *Bristol's Other History* (Bristol, 1983); S.J.Tanner *Suffrage Movement in Bristol: How the Women's Suffrage Movement Began in Bristol Fifty Years Ago* (Bristol, 1918); Mary Estlin's correspondence can be viewed in the BRL microfilm *Estlin Papers*, and see also Clare Taylor *British and American Abolitionists: An Episode in Transatlantic Understanding* (Edinburgh, 1974) pp.382-3; for Thomas, H.E.Meller op. cit., pp.83, 138, 152-4, 170.

collecting and training neglected girls under 13 years of age..', for migration to Canada. [134] In the later Victorian period there was a spate of new mission foundations, which Helen Meller regarded as the result of a 'cultural renaissance' in Bristol 1865-75, stimulating a 'civilizing mission to the poor'. [135] In the world of fund-raising for foreign missions the progress of British imperialism saw the original initiatives augmented by a host of others, representing ever more specific concerns. [136]

Sectarian division in education persisted up to the elections to the first local School Board which were dominated by the controversy that had attended the passage of Forster's Act at national level. A Conservative/Roman Catholic alliance in favour of denominationalism emerged, though the non-sectarian bloc won the day. [137] A last significant phase of voluntary school establishment in Bristol occurred in the 1870s, suggesting that the denominational impulse behind charity foundations was initially stimulated, rather than quelled, by the introduction of the state system. In addition to sectarian concerns and the efforts of the Gladstonian state a third factor shaped schooling in this phase: like the medical charities, the voluntary schools had provided the stability of employment and the networks for training and interraction that encouraged the evolution of teaching into a profession. [138]

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134 BRO 30251/S3/1; Canadian Home: *J.Wright & co's (Matthew's)Bristol and Clifton Directory* 1890, p.552.

135 New missions: Broad Plain House (1874), St Agnes Mission (1875) Church Aid Society (1896), The People's Bethel Mission (1880), the Magic Lantern Mission (1885), the Baptist Mills Peoples' Mission (1893), and the Church Army; H.E. Meller op. cit., chs. 6 & 7, quote p.137. Meller suggests that the period from the 1860s was qualitatively different with a '..growing emphasis given to the need positively to attract people to organizations and institutions by offering them something more tangible than salvation in the next life; and the growing desire to foster communities and community spirit' *(p.123). This seems* to me to be overstated, and to do a disservice to the ideals and efforts of early nineteenth century philanthropists, although clearly suburban growth was a major stimulus.

136 For example, the 1880s saw the establishment of the Zenana Missionary Society, devoted to women and children in India, Ceylon and China, the Universities Mission to Central Africa, and the Algoma Mission, whose target group was settlers, miners, lumbermen and 'Red Indians' J.W.Arrowsmith op. cit., p.254.

137 John Latimer *Annals... Nineteenth Century* (Bristol, 1887) pp.455-6; the eventual composition being four Conservatives, six Liberals, one Independent, one free Methodist, one Roman Catholic and two Wesleyans, with the Quaker Liberal Lewis Fry in the chair; see 'Proceedings of the Common Council' 13/12/1870 for the Special meeting where application to establish a School Board was made: of those who requisitioned the meeting and the application to Education Department, 5 were Liberals (C.J.Thomas, Mark Whitwill, Algernon Warren, George Wills, D.Parker Evans) and only one Conservative, the corn merchant W.K.Wait; for the Board, A.B.Beaven *Bristol Lists* op. cit., pp.107-8; for the other philanthropic and cultural efforts of Board members see H.E.Meller op. cit., p.176 and passim., though in contrast to Latimer, Meller plays down sectarian antagonism; the distinctions between conservative and liberal educational ideologies is drawn by S.Humphries 'Schooling and the working class in Bristol, 1870-1914', *Southern History* vol 1 (1979) pp.176-80.

138 Charity schools were the locus of professional teaching associations: for the Friends Day School Association see BRO SF/FD/AR/1a), and *Bristol Mercury* 22/5/1858 for the formation of the Western Union of Teachers in Bristol, with a secretary from the Hannah More Schools and President from the Redcross St. British School; for an early effort to standardise local examinations, see the Gloucester School Prize Association *Bristol Mercury* 27/3/1858; teaching profession: Harold Perkin *The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880* (London 1989) pp.349-50; A.M.Carr-Saunders and P.A.Wilson *The Professions* (Oxford, 1933) pp.252-3;

The other area in which the state capitalised on philanthropic initiatives was juvenile delinquency, hitherto tackled by the ragged schools, reformatories and industrial schools. [139] The roots lay with those educational and missionary charities which had long emphasized visiting and personal knowledge of the family, the work with children being seen as a means of social intervention with parents. [140] Meanwhile the notion that institutionalisation could achieve reform of 'vicious' habits was brought to bear on the newly articulated 'problem' of juvenile crime. [141] These strands came together in the well-known career of Mary Carpenter, which began with her involvement in the Girls Branch of the Lewin's Mead Sunday School. [142] The idea of her first Ragged School (1846) was to reach those children whose deprivation had thus far excluded them from both dame and charity schools, and provide them with '..Religious and Moral Training, intellectual and Industrial training, self-respect and cleanliness.' [143] She later participated in the public debate over reformatories, with her stance in favour of moral reform rather than retribution contributing to the shape of the Youthful Offenders Act of 1854. [144] By the 1870s a coherent institutional structure was in place to cater to the sub-stratum of youths adjudged delinquent children with two reformatories, and several industrial schools funded in part by charity and in part by Government. [145]

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[139] Precursors were a School of Industry in St Phillip and St Jacob (1820s), and a Girls Sewing Work School attached to the Congregational Zion Chapel (1830s) started, most probably as an adjunct of the Dorcas Society based there from 1832, see BRO SF/A10/3b) A.Naish et al. op. cit, and BRO 38603/Z/S/1 (Zion Chapel Dorcas Society).

[140] John S.Broad op. cit., 'Address' pp.43-5; 2nd. Annual Report of the Diocesan Society, *FFBJ* 12/2/1814, for rescuing children from '..ignorance, profaneness, poverty and wretchedness..', and also as a force that '..must materially improve the habits of their parents.'; indeed this theme can also be detected in the efforts of the early eighteenth century charity school proponents, see Derek Robson op. cit., p.33 and Craig Rose 'London's Charity Schools, 1690-1730', *History Today* 40, (March, 1990) p.22.

[141] See Susan Magarey 'The invention of juvenile delinquency in early nineteenth century England' *Labour History* 34 (1978) pp.11-27 for a provocative introduction to this theme.

[142] Ruby J.Saywell *Mary Carpenter of Bristol* (Bristol, 1964); Jo Manton *Mary Carpenter and the Children of the Streets* (London 1976); J.Estlin.Carpenter *The Life and Work of Mary Carpenter* (London, 1879); by 1831 she was home-visiting in the capacity of Superintendent of the school. She was also a founder member of the Lewins Mead Chapel Working and Visiting Society

[143] Quoted in Ruby J.Saywell op. cit., p.5; see also *FFBJ* 26/12/1846 for a report by the master engaged by Carpenter of the first day's teaching; the school was based in St James' Back and funded initially by the Unitarian congregation. Carpenter later established the Kingswood Day Industrial School (1852), later reorganised as a reformatory for convicted juvenile boys, and the first reformatory for girls, the Red Lodge in Park Row (1854).

[144] R.J.W.Selleck 'Mary Carpenter: a confident and contradictory reformer', *History of Education* 14, 2, (1985) pp.101-113.

[145] Under the terms of the Industrial Schools Acts of 1857 and 1866 children convicted of begging, or minor offences were sent to a tier of schools between the reformatories and the ordinary day schools, such as the Certified Industrial Schools of Pennywell Road, Clifton, Cotham and Park Row, and the Bristol Training Ship "Formidable" where homeless and destitute boys between 11 and 14 were sent to be trained for the Royal Navy or Merchant fleet, see entries in J.Wright's Bristol Directory 1876, 1882; for the process by which the Pennywell Road Industrial School came under the terms of the Act, see *Bristol Mercury* 22/5/1858.

Voluntarism augmented the efforts of the state in several other respects. Although the lunatic asylum was publicly funded a Committee of Visitors played a quasi-charitable role. [146] The penal system was also supported by a variety of initiatives. Like the penitentiaries, the Asylum for Hopeful Discharged Female Prisoners (1854) offered training in household work leading to a placement in service, and two other prisoners' missions started in the 1890s. [147] At the end of the century the Royal Victoria Home was built for the moral reform and social integration of female convicts, 'poor inebriate women' and 'hopeful' small offenders; religious education was high on the agenda, as was training for domestic service, and teaching married women '..how to be better housewives'. [148] It was public money which first recognised physical disability as a category of need, with the Home for Crippled Children (1876) largely financed by the Poor Law Board. Charitable initiative came soon after, with Ada Vachell's Guild of the Brave Poor Things, formed in the 1890s, which may well have offered crippled children a greater degree of self-determination and shared identity. [149]

By contrast the efforts of campaigning groups reveal ongoing tensions in the relationship between the voluntary sector and the state. Temperance agitation continued - for example, the Bristol auxiliary to the United Kingdom Alliance (1850s) campaigned for reform to the laws permitting traffic in liquor - though again new formations indicate religious fragmentation. [150] Animal rights were defended by the Bristol and Clifton Auxiliary of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (1842) whose list of concerns ranged from local to international. [151] The early closing campaign arose from another philanthropic interest, the leisure hours of clerks and shop workers. [152] An Anti-State Church Association (1846) brought together dissenting clergymen

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146 For instance the 'Lunatics New Year's Ball', held in 1858 by the Committee of Visitors and their families: *Bristol Mercury* 9/1/1858; the City and County of Bristol Lunatic Asylum was opened in 1861 in Fishponds, following the Lunatic Acts of 1845, see John Latimer *Annals...Nineteenth Century* op. cit., pp. 346-7, and J.W.Arrowsmith op. cit., p.241.

147 *Bristol Mercury* 23/1/1858; J.W.Arrowsmith op. cit., p.258.

148 Trade Directory 1900; its sister institution in Brentry catered to alcoholics, funded by the state under the 1898 Inebriates Act

149 C.Bruce Perry *The Voluntary Medical Institutions* op. cit., pp17-18; Trade Directory 1900; F.M.Unwin *Ada Vachell of Bristol* (Bristol, 1928); a helpful introduction to this neglected topic is Seth Koven 'Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers, and the Great War in Great Britain' *The American Historical Review* vol.99, no.4, October 1994, pp.1167-1202, esp. pp.1172-1180.

150 Church of England Temperance Society (1870s), Clifton Down Gospel Temperance Society (1880s), Bristol Women's Temperance Association (1880s), Women's Total Abstinence Union (1893), and Bristol United Temperance Council (1897, formed to co-ordinate the efforts of these disparate groups.

151 *FFBJ* 14/11/1846: ie. ill-treatment of horses, cruelty to calves being transported to market, Spanish bull-fighting, fox-hunting; there was also an Animals Friend Society (1860s), an auxiliary to the national Anti-Vivisection Society (1880s) and the Bristol and District Canine Society (1890s).

152 Trades' Early Closing Society (1840s), Bristol Early Closing Association (1860s), see H.E.Meller op. cit., pp.126-7

aiming to argue that '..any legislation by secular governments in matters of religion is contrary to the principle of the New Testament'. [153] At the end of the century lobby groups promoted the adoption of international law for arbitration in disputes, and conversely, a branch of the Navy League which urged that an arms build-up was 'the best guarantee of peace'. [154]

This period witnessed the undermining of the power of subscribers to dominate access to a charity's bounty, a trend first discernible in medical philanthropy. Admission to the Bristol Free Institution for the Treatment of Diseases Peculiar to Women and Children (1857) might be on the basis of subscriber note, or a note from 'a housekeeper who can certify the merits of the case', or simply at a reduced market rate.[155] A new Committee member, Mark Whitwill, inspired its transition in 1866 from dispensary to the Bristol Childrens' Hospital, in which subscribers had no rights of admission: 'Enough that a child be sick and poor, it will be admitted, provided there be a vacant bed, and that Medical Officers consider the case a suitable one for the Hospital.' [156] The Redland Dispensary had started in 1860 using the standard subscriber note system, then became part provident institution, whereby the subscriber note - one's own or one's patron's - bought a month's treatment. Bristol Medical Missionary Society (1870s) was a charitable dispensary whose services were free to the poor without recommendation. Nurse attendance in the home could be procured from the Bristol District Nurses Society (1890s) on either a private or a charitable basis. Likewise the Read Dispensary for Women and Children (1874) was funded both by the patients themselves and by voluntary contributions, as was the Bristol Private Hospital for Women and Children (1895). These last two were distinguished not only by their funding method and target group, but by the presence of women doctors, notably Eliza Walker Dunbar, who had earlier been ousted from her appointment to the Children's Hospital in 1873 by male colleagues who would not accept a female practitioner. [157]

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153 *FFBJ* 7/3/1846; there was also a Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control (1870s).

154 Bristol Peace and Arbitration Association (1880s), Workmens' Peace Association; quote, Trade Directory 1900.

155 Bristol Directory., 1862; *Bristol Mercury* 20/2/1858; Charles J.G.Saunders *The Bristol Royal Hospital for Sick Children* (Bristol, 1960) p.10: rates were, Out-patients:- women: 1s 6d, children 6d. first visit, then 3d. and 1½d.; Home-visits:- women: 3s, children 1s 6d.; Medicine:- 6d. per bottle.

156 Ibid., pp.9-10, the quote appeared in each Annual Report; Whitwill was a Liberal Councillor, Congregationalist, Temperance champion and Chair of the Bristol School Board in the 1880, see also note 137 and A.B.Beaven op. cit., pp.107-111, 114.

157 Charles J.G.Saunders *The Bristol Royal Hospital for Sick Children* pp.12, 62.

The diminishing power of the subscriber represents a major change in the history of medical voluntarism: how is it to be explained ? The evidence just presented suggests one factor was the growing preparedness of the beneficent to accept the doctor as sole arbiter of admissions, perhaps because the profession itself now regarded specialist hospitals as bona fide institutions rather than career vehicles for outsiders. [158] It also points up the increasing pressure on medical services to cater to the stratum of the population who were neither wealthy nor paupers or charity cases. This was the period in which friendly societies began employing doctors, in which the workmen's Saturday Fund commenced, and in which pay-beds were introduced in Guy's and St Thomas'. [159] Lastly, as the cost of medical treatment advanced with its technology, so hospitals sought fresh sources of funding. [160]

Bristol's most celebrated new charity of the period actually offered a theological justification for subscriber anonymity. This was George Muller's Orphan Homes, which began life as the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, dedicated to Bible distribution and education as well as the care of orphans. Between 1836 and 1870 the homes grew from three houses in St Pauls, with 75 children, to the purpose built homes on Ashley Hill with capacity for 2,050. [161] Muller eschewed the usual methods of attracting subscribers, in favour of individual contacts, appeals from the pulpit and use of the evangelical press in which he mythologised his fund-raising success as the direct result of the power of prayer. [162] The Orphanages held an extraordinary appeal to both rich and poor donors, partly due to the fact that the charity published no subscription lists, and deliberately stood apart from the sectarian identities of the Bristol voluntarist world. [163] Like the Children's Hospital, admission was

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158 Lindsay Granshaw op. cit., pp.212-3.

159 Work in progress by Steven Cherry promises to elucidate the history of the Saturday Fund, see also his 'Beyond National Health Insurance. The Voluntary Hospitals and Hospital Contributory Schemes: A Regional Study' *Social History of Medicine* 5, 3, (1992) pp.455-482; pay-beds: Brian Abel-Smith *The Hospitals 1800-1948: A Study in Social Administration in England and Wales* (London, 1964) ch.9.

160 Keir Waddington '"Grasping Gratitude": Charity and Hospital Finance in Late-Victorian London' unpublished paper presented at the Neale Colloquium in British History, 1995, University College London.

161 J.Latimer *Annals...Nineteenth Century* pp.223-6; David Owen op. cit., pp.160-2.

162 Nancy Garton *George Muller and his Orphans* (London, 1963) pp.56, 65-72, ch.8; Arthur T.Pierson *George Muller of Bristol* (London, 1912) chs. xi-xv, xxii, esp. pp.161, 221, 327, 440; Muller's rhetoric rather obscured the vital role of his fellow emigre and co-religionist Conrad Finzel, the Bristol sugar magnate, who had been convinced that a serious fire at his refinery was God's judgement on him for failing in his charity, and had henceforth vowed to donate a third of his income to good works: Jean Burrows 'The Finzels of Counterslip and Clevedon' *The Bristol Templar 1992, Bristol Faces and Places* (Bristol 1992) pp.7-17.

163 In 1871-2 the Scriptural Knowledge Institution received £19,000 in gifts, about three times the charity income of Bristol Infirmary

based directly on need, rather than personal recommendation: Muller donors therefore experienced genuine 'caritas' divorced from the usual concerns of power and status in the gift relationship. [164]

Muller's charity was also representative of another important trend which marked this period, the proliferation of residential institutions for specific groups. These might aim to channel poor or 'at risk' girls towards domestic service. [165] They might offer shelter and rehabilitation for 'fallen women'. [166] One was provided for that other favoured target group of mid-century missionaries, seamen, who received their Sailors' Home in 1853. In the 1870s homes were also established for Working Boys, Working Women and Working Girls in Business, Apprentice Boys,and Invalid Ladies of Limited Means, as well as a Childrens' Home and the Bristol Boys Home.

How is this new phase of institutionalism to be explained ? Surveys of Bristol's population growth between 1841 and 1931 have shown that the 1860s and to a lesser extent the 1870s were the two decades in which increase by net immigration was most intense, and it seems certain that part of this increase represents the presence in the city of a large transitory population of migrant workers. [167] In meeting this new demand for cheap, 'respectable' accomodation philanthropists drew on their familiar goal of socialisation through employment. Efforts to prepare poor women or prostitutes for domestic service were a continuation of earlier initiatives, and the Sailors' Home also intended an intervention in a casual labour market: 'According to his conduct is he (ie. the resident) recommended, and often through that recommendation advanced, and captains and owners wanting crews knew where to get them at the shortest notice'. [168] A third explanatory factor was the growing national debate from the mid-century on prostitution and sexual mores, which inspired local initiatives. [169] In addition to homes and missions, the moral reform campaign which accompanied

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164 See below, Chapter 9 d).

165 Servants Home and Registry (1840s) later the Preventive Mission; Domestic Servants Institution and Registry Office; Wood Girls Cottage and The Home (1850s).

166 Bristol Female Mission (1855); Preventive Mission, St. John's House of Mercy in Bedminster, the Temporary Home for Fallen Women (all 1860s); see J.W.Arrowsmith op. cit., p.255; Trade Directory 1876..

167 H.A.Shannon 'Migration and the Bristol Area' in H.A.Shannon and E.Grebenick *The Population of Bristol* (Cambridge, 1943) pp.10-11; B.W.E.Alford 'Economic development' op. cit., pp.267-70; *Condition* pp.28-9.

168 *FFBJ* 28/11/1846, letter from Christopher Claxton initiating subscription for the Home.

169 See Eric Trudgill *Madonnas and Magdalens, the Origin and Development of Victorian Sexual Attitudes* (London, 1976) esp. chs 8 & 11; Judith R.Walkowitz *Prostitution and Victorian Society, Women, class and the state* (Cambridge, 1980) esp. chs 1-4.

the agitation around the Contagious Diseases Act gave rise to Bristol's Social Purity Alliance.[170] Several Bristol women were the '..body guard, ... *corps d'elite*' of Josephine Butler's repeal campaign and were also active in the foundation and management of Old Park Lock Hospital, which catered to women only, the name denoting its function of tackling sexually transmitted disease. [171]

Helen Meller's work on Bristol's 'socio-religious' life after 1870 has provided a thorough account of the burgeoning number of associations directed at 'religious and intellectual improvement' of young men and women. Meller charts the way in which alarm at rapid urban growth was coupled with concern for the cultural impoverishment of the working class, epitomized by Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*. [172] These anxieties gave rise to societies oriented to the young, offering meetings, lectures and the establishment of libraries. [173] Temperance activists drew children into Bands of Hope, which grew out of the Total Abstinence Society's work with schools. [174] The last quarter of the century witnessed the growth of suburban church youth clubs, an area in which the Congregationalists were particularly prominent. For instance in 1883 Redland Park Chapel formed a Boys Brigade aimed at '..the promotion of habits of reverence, discipline, self-respect, and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness'. [175]

Meller's analysis can be augmented by recent work which elucidates the motive for philanthropic youth work. The reference to 'muscular Christianity' in the preceding quotation may now be better understood in the light of cultural studies which have shown how insecurity and religious doubt gave rise to a more assertive masculinity. In the public schools, in literature and in social action male self-perceptions now stressed moral fibre through the healthy body. [176] Imperial discourse gave

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170 Bristol Female Mission (1855); Preventive Mission, St. John's House of Mercy in Bedminster, the Temporary Home for Fallen Women (all 1860s); see J.W.Arrowsmith op. cit., p.255; Trade Directory 1876; the feminist response to the Contagious Diseases Act is also covered in Frank Mort *Dangerous Sexualities: Medico-Moral Politics in England since 1830* (London, 1987) Part Two.

171 Judith R.Walkowitz op. cit., pp.121 (quotation), 130-1; BRO 40145/P/24; for the original London Lock Hospital (1746) D.Owen op. cit., p.52.

172 H.E.Meller op. cit., pp.48-51

173 Bristol Young Mens' Society (1837); Church of England Young Men's Society (1840s); Young Womens' Christian Association (1855); Young Men's Christian Association and Reading Rooms (1853), for which see BRL B1533 *Address delivered at the Broadmead Room Tuesday, June 14th, 1853 at the Inaugural Gathering of the Young Men's Christian Association* (Bristol, 1853); H.E.Meller, op. cit., pp.126-130, 145-9; a later initiative was the Clergy Daughters School (1870s) which ensured that the impoverished middle classes retained a degree of respectability.

174 *Bristol Mercury* 27/3/1858, 24/7/1858 for public processions and outdoor festivals.

175 H.E.Meller op. cit., pp.169-175; Trade Directory 1900.

176 Norman Vance *The Sinews of the Spirit* (Cambridge, 1985); Donald E.Hall ed., *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age* (Cambridge, 1994); Lynne Segal *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men* (London, 1990)

further encouragement to youth workers seeking to cultivate manly virtues in their charges. [177] Lastly, it is now argued that in the later nineteenth century, for the middle class at least, a new view of childhood began to take hold. The advance of education, the trend to smaller, more affective families and the marketing of commodities for children created a perception of childhood as a distinct and extended phase of the life-cycle. [178] In addition to stimulating charities for orphans and young people these concerns gave rise directly to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (the Bristol branch began in 1889) which was instrumental in developing the notion of children's rights embodied in the Children Act of 1908. [179]

Conclusion

Three stages of change have been set out. The first, around the turn of the century saw, a rapid expansion of voluntarist activity, distinguished by an unusual degree of non-sectarian participation; this was analysed in the context of war and Evangelicalism. From the 1820s the identification of associations and institutions with specific churches or chapels was reasserted, and henceforth philanthropy was closely interrelated with the city's religious sub-culture. This second phase also saw a shift in the nature of women's voluntarism from a subordinate position in male-led societies to a proactive participation in identifiably female charities. The third stage was marked by the shift away from active subscriber involvement, initially discerned in the medical charities, where for the first time the principle of reciprocity was absent from the gift relationship and power shifted to the administrator and the recipient. There was also a new spate of residential institutions that responded to demographic pressure and cultural forces. Two factors were observed throughout the period: the importance of charity to the career ambitions of doctors, and the presence of the state.

What can all this contribute to our theoretical understanding of voluntary societies ? It does confirm the increased pace of voluntarist activity at the turn of the century that has been observed

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pp.104-111; J.A.Mangan and James Walvin ed. *Manliness and Morality* (Manchester, 1987), esp. J.A.Springhall 'Building Character in the British Boy: The Attempt to extend Christian Manliness to Working Class Adolescents'; also John Tosh amd Michael Roper ed., *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London, 1991).

177 Geoffrey Pearson *Hooligan A History of Respectable Fears* (London, 1983) pp.106-116; Anne Summers 'Edwardian Militarism' Raphael Samuel ed. *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British Identity Volume 1 History and Politics* (London, 1989) pp.236-256.

178 Jose Harris *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1993) paperback edn. pp.84-91; Hugh Cunningham *The Children of the Poor: Representations of Childhood since the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 1991) p.3, chs. 6, 8.

179 Jose Harris op. cit., p.75.

elsewhere. [180] Yet the early nineteenth century 'change in trend' discerned by Morris looks somewhat less decisive in a city like Bristol, whose middle-class had long used a well-developed network of charities and voluntary institutions to create its 'ideal society'. [181] Likewise the continuing eminence of eighteenth century formations sits uneasily with Koditschek's stress on the voluntary society as bearer of the new liberal capitalist ideal; instead it hints at a plurality of goals and aspirations. Bristol's 'take-off' of societies was also distinguished by an absence of sectarian or party feeling. Rather than providing a forum for new men to reach for a shared identity these were groups in which the old elite buried its differences under the pressure of short term crises and against the backdrop of war and Evangelicalism. The first phase under consideration cannot therefore be best understood by reference to a change in social structure. Barry's conceptualization is more helpful: 'Rather than tracing a linear process, we may need to think ...about a cyclical one, in which voluntary associations took on a key role at times when other forms of community organisation were incapable of sustaining their traditional tasks'. [182]

While this formulation detaches the chronology of voluntary charity from a narrow economic determinism we should not reduce its civic role to a welfare function devoid of sectarian and factional significance. Morris and Koditschek have minimized the importance of this, stressing the competitive appeal of sectarian associationalism, in education for instance, but emphasizing above all the role of the voluntary society in the formation of a homogeneous class identity. [183] In the light of Bristol's political divisions, outlined in Part I, it is tempting to regard factionalism in the voluntary world as more suggestive of middle class fragmentation than consolidation. Women's charity poses a similar problem. In one respect female voluntarism may be viewed as further evidence that '...middle-class formation was woman's work'. [184] Yet philanthropy also provided a

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180 Ford K.Brown op. cit., p.317, and passim; R.J.Morris 'Voluntary Societies' op. cit., pp.95-101.
181 Ibid., pp.96, 114, 116.
182 Jonathan Barry 'Review Article' op. cit., p.200.
183 R.J.Morris 'Voluntary Societies' op. cit., 112-3; Theodore Koditschek op. cit., ch.10 sees sectarianism as a mirror of the competitve religious marketplace, for societies and class, note 2 above and ch.1 p.5; R.J.Morris has been careful to stress his more nuanced view, see his review of Koditschek, *Economic History Review* 2nd. series,xlv, 2 (1992) pp.420-2, though others find the similarities between the two authors more overt, eg. Karl Ittmann *Work, Gender and Family in Victorian England* (London, 1995) p.104, and note.12, p.71.
184 S.M.Blumin *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge, 1990) p.181, cited in Jonathan Barry 'Review Article' op. cit.

platform for articulating the case for a female presence in the public arena: Mary Carpenter's prominence in the reformatory movement is one example, another is the more self-consciously feminist thread linking anti-slavery to the Contagious Diseases controversy, to woman suffrage. [185]

Questions are also raised about the interplay between publicly funded welfare and the charitable sector. In some respects the evidence simply confirms the picture of the mid-century as a turning point in respect of state intervention, in the reformatories in the 1850s, in elementary education in the 1870s and alcohol treatment in the 1890s. Yet it is also possible to observe a more permeable relationship between the public sphere of voluntary charity and the actions of national and local government. The ideas that informed the 'birth of the asylum' influenced both, although it was public finance which took care of the criminal and the lunatic, leaving the more manageable deviants to philanthropy. On the issues of poverty, drink, medicine, schooling, slavery and empire the voluntary associations stimulated public debate. In some of these areas the state responded, just as it had accepted the case for openness and accountability with regard to endowed charity, and enhanced security for mutualist organisations. Whatever their narrow interests or affiliation, voluntary charities provided a site in which public opinion was formed, and in which social policy might evolve.

[185] It is interesting to note in this respect that associations campaigning for women's political rights in revolutionary France based their claims in part upon women's charitable role, see Joan B.Landes *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca, 1988) pp.117-21.

Chapter 9

Voluntary Charities: Getting and Spending

Historians of philanthropy have shied away from economic analysis of voluntary charity due to the fragmentary nature of the sources. [1] Bristol charity records contain a number of long-run serials, and it is therefore possible to examine their finances and ask questions about their efficacy. This chapter will begin by describing approaches to fund-raising and publicising charities. It will then investigate income flows in the context of the broader economic cycles of the town. Finally it will evaluate the benefits of voluntarism.

a) Fund-raising i): Public representation

The material presence of voluntary charities was announced to prospective donors by annual general meetings, annual reports and newspaper accounts of their activities. Annual reports varied slightly in format: some simply repeated a standard introduction, followed by a copy of the rules and perhaps the abstract of a legacy; others included a chairman's address, and if an auxiliary, might reproduce some of the thoughts of its parent body; a few appended quite lengthy case studies of their work. [2] Common features were the itemising of expenditure and income by the treasurer, and a named list of donors, usually distinguishing the members for life who had given a large lump sum, and separating givers of legacies or donations from subscribers, but in all cases setting out the sum given.

Annual reports are most readily understood in terms of R.J.Morris's characterisation of voluntary societies as subscriber democracies, whose origins lay with the organisational structure of the joint-stock company, and the non-conformist chapel. [3] Just as shareholders or congregations required

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1 For example Meg Whittle 'Philanthropy in Preston: The Changing Face of Charity in a 19th. century Provincial Town' unpublished Ph.D. thesis University of Lancaster, (1990), p.20; the exception is R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party: The making of the British middle class, Leeds 1820-1850* (Manchester, 1990), chs. 8, 9, 12; see also the recent thesis of Amanda Berry, listed in the bibliography.

2 Examples of each type are BRL B9780 *State of the Orphan Asylum for the Year 1821;* BRO 35893/21/a, b, c, d, e, *State of the Bristol Infirmary* (1742-1873); BRL B3951 *8th Report of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society*; BRL B16888 *Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Bristol Baptist Itinerant Society* (1838), BRL B16885 *Annual Report of the Bristol City Mission Society* 1842.

3 R.J.Morris 'Voluntary Societes and Bristish Urban Elites, 1780-1850:An Analysis', *The Historical Journal*, 26, I (1983), pp.104-5. It is worth noting that Anglican vestries also obliged the churchwarden to present an annual account, for which he

assurance that their contributions were being handled responsibly, so the open accounting of a charity offered a guarantee to donors that their gifts would not be misapplied. Beyond this the reports ranged from the sparsely functional to those which were used as a forum for the discussion of social ills and their possible solutions. Above all, the goal was to elicit funds.

Newspaper advertisements and notices were also an essential part of the fund-raising process. In the late eighteenth century they were used by charities to advertise their meetings and functions, as a forum for articulating their objectives, and for publishing subscription lists. Editorial accounts of meetings were initially limited to a few lines in the local news section, where the main interest was in who attended and the amount raised. As the size of newspapers expanded in the nineteenth century, so the amount of space devoted to charity increased, with advertisements of the annual meeting, followed by a notice placed by the charity setting out its accounts and the main points of its annual report, and this in turn followed by the newspaper's own description of the annual meeting. [4] By the mid-century, charity reports could occupy several columns, with verbatim extracts from speeches offering participants access to a much wider public than that addressed at the original meeting. This allowed the church in particular a heightened command of the media and capacity to comment on events. [5] In the later nineteenth century charity events remained a common part of the local reporter's round. [6]

As a more public product than the annual report, newspapers were not innocent of social or political significance. A voluntary group's use of the print media indicated that it had sufficient wealth and status to render it acceptable to respectable society, as the almost complete absence of friendly societies indicates. In the eighteenth century town, the role of local newspapers in

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was personally liable, though Morris is surely correct to highlight the role of the chapel, since there is no evidence that the parishioners had access to the books, especially in a city of closed vestries like Bristol.

4 In the case of the Gloucester, Clergy and Colston societies these were lengthy lists of members of the city's elite who were identified with the different associations, and reports of speeches and toasts were scanned for partisan meaning, see for instance *FFBJ* 5/9/1846.

5 For instance, *Bristol Mercury* 15/5/1858 where details of the Indian Mutiny were followed by a report of the local Wesleyan Methodist Mission annual meeting, explaining the 'calamities' were due to England's '..neglect of duty, as the Christian governors of a vast heathen territory'.

6 See BRO 40301 for a journalist's diary, from 1878.

expressing political and religious divisions had necessarily made the contents selective. [7] In this respect it is possible to regard the references in the nineteenth century to, say, a non-conformist charity in a Tory/Anglican print like *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, as a sign that no matter how bitter sectional controversy became, voluntary charity was now at least an acceptable activity, regardless of its stamp.

The charities' practice of naming subscribers and showing the amount given can be understood in three ways. Firstly it was a means of encouraging others to match the example set by generous subscribers. Secondly, if social anthropologists are right to emphasize that the gift relationship is characterised by its power to confer status on the giver, then the published subscription list can be seen as a means by which donors signalled social rank. [8] The ordinary subscriber was of the middling stratum of society, where the threat of downward social mobility was ever-present, and the concern to mark out status pervasive. [9] Social stratification within the middle classes was reflected in differentiation within the charities, where the make-up of the board and the presence of very wealthy 'life benefactors', marked out a hierarchy of bankers, professionals and large industrialists as the managerial elite. [10]

A final reading of the named subscription list sets it in the context of its antecedents, the joint-stock company and the non-conformist chapel. This introduces the possibility that donors were not simply publicising their wealth and generosity, but also sought to identify themselves as equal participants in a shared venture with an intrinsic purpose. Indeed the notion of subscription has a more complex ancestry than chapel and business. Its semantic origin was the signature at the bottom of a document, but from at least the early sixteenth century this was understood as signifying consent or adhesion to the document's content. [11] By the same time its usage also took in a more

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7 Jonathan Barry 'The press and the politics of culture in Bristol 1660-1775' ed. J.Black and J.Gregory *Culture, Politics and Society in Britain 1660-1800* (Manchester, 1991) pp.49-81, though Barry also points out that many partisan charitable events were reported in rival newspapers.

8 See my discussion of Mauss, Levi-Strauss, Newby etc. in the *Introduction.*

9 John Seed 'From 'middling sort' to middle class in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century England', ed. M.L.Bush *Social Orders and Social Classes in Europe since 1500* (London, 1992) pp.124-5; for subscription and status Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., p.212, and for stratification and status within the middle class, pp.24-5, 49, 103-4, 264-5.

10 R.J.Morris 'Voluntary Societes and British Urban Elites..' op. cit., pp.101-2; John Seed 'From 'middling sort' to middle class..' op. cit., pp.132-3.

11 These comments are based on the entries for 'Subscribe', 'Subscriber' and 'Subscription' in the *OED* vol ix, part II.

generalised sense of agreement. [12] In the nineteenth century subscription was understood firstly as signatory assent, secondly as a practical arrangement for the publication of books, the running of concerts or even organising a firm, and thirdly as the expression of approval or consent. [13] This last sense suggests that the printed charity subscription may have been perceived, or at least intended, primarily as a form of public endorsement of a standpoint or practice.

Consideration of annual or periodic fund-raising meetings reveals the shifting social meaning of voluntarism. *Table 9.1* examines the changing use of civic buildings by the voluntary charities between the latter part of the eighteenth century and the mid-Victorian period. The evidence is drawn from the local press, using notices of meetings or fund-raising activities, and while this source has the clear disadvantage of not catching all the philanthropic functions that may have occurred in the given years, it almost certainly does show those groups with the highest public profile.

Table 9.1 Meeting places of voluntary charities, Bristol 1774-1858

	1774	1797	1806	1819	1836	1846	1858
Inn	2	2	2	1	2	1	2
Church-Inn	1	3	4	3	3	2	1
Church-Hall	6	2	2	1			
Cathedral	1					2	
Cathedral-Hall	2						
Cathedral-Inn		2	2	2	2	2	1
Public Hall	1	1	1	3	11	21	41
Own Institution		3	4	3	10	10	11
Church-School		1	1	1	1	1	1
School				5	4	6	8
Own rooms				1	2	4	3
Chapel/Church				2	5	7	12
Outdoor						1	3

Source: *FFBJ* 1774, 1797 1846; *Bristol Gazette* 1806, 1836; *Bristol Mercury* 1819, 1858.

[12] For example, William Shakespeare 'Advise the Aaron, what is to be done, And we will all subscribe to thy advise' *Titus Andronicus* iv, ii, 130, cited in *OED* p.43.

[13] Examples of the practical use of subscription include the publication of Manchee's *Bristol Charities*, list of subscribers pp.v-vii, for a concert, *Bristol Mercury* 15/2/1819, for a firm, Bristol Subscription Brewery, *Bristol Gazette* 20/3/1806, *Bristol Mercury* 25/11/1816; for subscription as assent, Hazlitt *Spirit of the Age* (1825) p.173 (cited in *OED* p.43); 'subscription' to petitions against 'Tax on Houses' *FFBJ* 4/6/1803, and 'Tax on Houses' *Bristol Mercury* 22/2/1819.

Instead of simply reflecting the growth of voluntarism, a firm pattern of change emerges. In the 1770s the typical annual meeting commenced with a service in one of the parish churches or the Cathedral, followed by a procession to one of the old gild halls or the Assembly Rooms for a feast. This approach persisted in the 1790s, though the use of gild halls for the feast was giving way to inns. After the 1800s only a few high status societies (Gloucestershire, Colston, Clergy) continued with this traditional format, though its retention demonstrates the longevity of civic memory in a city where ritualised procession of urban hierarchy from chapel to gildhall drinking had a long antiquity. [14] Popular churches for sermons were Bristol Cathedral, St James, St Augustine, St Stephen, and All Saints, where the Colston memorial was situated, and the short journey from these to the White Lion Inn or the Bush Tavern, both overlooking the River Frome, meant the participants traversed the central dock area en route to their feast. In their visibility these celebrations harked back to an era when the old parishes were not only the loci of religious life but of civic power. [15]

The first decade of the nineteenth century saw the trend towards holding meetings in the premises of the institutions themselves, and a growing preference for public buildings such as the Broadmead Rooms, the Assembly Rooms, and the newly opened schools. [16] These practices extended in the early to mid-Victorian period, with the continuing rise of the public hall being the most striking feature, along with a new approach, the use of sermons, *without* a subsequent feast. Schools were used more frequently and a small number of charities had their own committee room/office, or met at the Savings Bank. The St James and St Paul Benevolent School Society, observed a tradition of an annual service with the children, followed by a procession back to the school for tea, while at the end of the sequence the use of outdoor spaces, notably the Zoo, for childrens' temperance gatherings was becoming more common.

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14 David Harris Sacks 'The demise of the Martyrs: the Feasts of St Clement and St Katherine in Bristol, 1400-1600', *Social History* 11, (1986), p.151; for gild feasts, F.H.Rogers 'The Bristol Craft Gilds during the 16th and 17th Centuries' unpublished M.A. thesis University of Bristol (1949), p.91.

15 See Jonathan Barry 'The parish in civic life: Bristol and its churches 1640-1750' in S.J.Wright *Parish, Church and People* (London, 1988) for a discussion of the parish in the 18th. century; for the importance of the central area around the Frome in civic display, Mark Harrison *Crowds and History: Mass Phenomena in English Towns 1790-1835* (Cambridge, 1988) passim.

16 Though not all charities with their own building would meet there: the Dispensary still used pubs, *Bristol Gazette* 10/6/1806.

How are these developments to be explained ? A prime consideration is the changing status of the public house as locus of voluntary activity. Working class associations remained wedded to the pub until the tail end of the century, so there is an obvious social distinction to be made. The declining popularity of pub-going among the middle class was mentioned in the context of the temperance movement, and a variety of additional factors explain this aspect of respectable behaviour. [17] Drunkenness had become less popular with fashionable society, and was attacked by intellectuals, medical men and evangelicals just at the same time as tea and coffee drinking was gaining popularity. [18] Meanwhile the long-run trend towards a greater emphasis on private life intersected with the emerging middle class domestic ideology: Christian manliness now stressed sensitivity and familial obligation, while the female ideal of mother and home-maker was even more at odds with the rough sociability of the inn. [19]

Why then did the traditional format not maintain its pre-eminence ? New buildings offered alternative meeting spaces which symbolically resonated the wealth and power of subscribers, and, on a practical level, were less expensive in hire charges or catering. Decorum was increasingly important and the affairs of the charities were discussed much as the concerns of a business would be. [20] Buildings with a cultural purpose, such as the Bristol Institution (1823) and the Victoria Rooms (1843), undermined the popularity of the public house in hosting the discussion and debating clubs popular with merchants and professionals. [21] Their gender neutrality offered respectable ladies the chance to participate in public activity and attracted their help to charities which could not fulfil their functions without them. [22]

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17 See above, Chapter 8 c).

18 Brian Harrison *Drink and the Victorians* (London, 1971), pp.45-6, 91-4; W.R.Lambert *Drink and Society in Victorian Wales c.1820-c.1895* (Cardiff, 1983) pp.15-19.

19 Phillippe Aries and George Duby ed. *The History of Private Life* IV ; Peter Clark *The English Alehouse: a social history 1200-1830* (London, 1983); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., inns: pp.300, 427-8, and passim. for domestic ideology; for the persistence of this social trend, see 'Mass Observation' *The Pub and the People, a Worktown Study* (London, 1943) pp.138-143, 154-5.

20 G. Munro Smith op. cit., pp.24-5, 111 describes the Infirmary's abandonment of its dinners to avoid the violent squabbles in which they sometimes culminated

21 Ibid., pp.231-4, for the 'Bear's Cub Club' and others; in 1846, 12 out of the 21 public hall meetings were held in the Victoria Rooms, and in 1858, 26 out of 41; see also H.E.Meller op. cit., pp.57, 219, though she evaluates the hall solely as a musical venue.

22 Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., p.433; by the mid-century it was common for newspaper reports of annual meetings to remark that attendance was '...scanty, and consisted with scarcely an exception of the fair sex' *Bristol Mercury* 2/10/1858.

The timing of meetings reinforced exclusiveness. Most occurred during the weekday, either in the late morning or early afternoon, limiting attendance to those whose working lives permitted them sufficient freedom. This marks out voluntary charity as the preserve of the middle class, though some qualifications can be made. [23] A number of associations met in the evenings, while anti-war, anti-slavery, or temperance reformers hoping to appeal to the public at large had to lay on their functions during leisure hours. [24] Others coupled the annual meeting with a series of Sunday and evening sermons and collections, while a particular congregation, or group of chapels within a denomination could devote the regular Sunday service to the annual report. [25] Notwithstanding the financial importance of the very rich it was the clergy and the 'ladies' who were the footsoldiers of charitable effort. [26] The regularity with which the 'softer sex' were thanked for their presence, their parochial visiting or their fund-raising makes it clear that female support was vital. [27] Voluntary effort in charity was more than just an 'extra' activity for people otherwise employed - for the Bristol clergy, it was a component of working life, and for female activists it was effectively 'unpaid social work'. [28]

New forms of public charity activity were also more suitable for the participation of respectable society. Musical events held to benefit the Infirmary were important dates in the city's cultural calendar, and as the century progressed benefit concerts and balls remained an occasional feature of the fund-raising year. [29] Ladies who were reluctant to participate in other types of civic celebration, such as the illuminations marking victory over Napoleon, involved themselves actively with such

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23 R.J.Morris *Class Sect and Party* op. cit., p.186; the hours of work of most Bristolians had been long and regular, at least from the late eighteenth century, see Mark Harrison op. cit., ch.5.

24 For instance, the boards of the Infirmary and the Blind Asylum, the adult education and Sunday School societies and those geared to evening opening, the Mechanics Institute and the Church of England Young Men's Society.

25 *FFBJ* for the Colonial Church Society, 24/1/1846, and the Bible Society, 7/3/1846 which held two annual meetings, one at 11.30 am., and one at 6.30 pm., and a series of local meetings in the suburbs, all at 6.00 pm. or 7.00 pm; *Bristol Mercury* 13/3/1858 for annual meeting and collection of Bristol City Mission.

26 *FFBJ* 23/5/1846, 24/10/1846; *Bristol Mercury* 19/6/1858 for the impression of annual meetings consisting of an audience of ladies facing a platform of clergymen.

27 *Bristol Mercury* 4/1/1858, 20/3/1858, 22/5/1858, 24/7/1858.

28 Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., p.436.

29 *FFBJ* 19/3/1774, 28/6/1774, when Handel's Messiah was performed at the Cathedral; *FFBJ* 26/2/1803, 9/4/1803, 16/4/1803, when the example of Birmingham General Hospital inspired a large scale musical festival with venues divided between the Theatre and St Paul's Church; *Bristol Gazette* 11/3/1836, *FFBJ* 2/5/1846, 3/10/1846, *Bristol Mercury* 4/9/1858, (Diocesan School Society, the Infirmary and the Blind Asylum).

festivals. [30] Bazaars dated from the mid-century in Bristol, when they became an established, if minor, aspect of the fund-raising year, devoted to 'one-off' appeals, and often attracting the patronage of the town's leading women. [31] These events happily combined charitable action with the chance for unchaperoned interaction with males which could occur at bazaars.

> 'For weeks past fair fingers have been deftly plying these arts of mystic elegance in which the sex are adepts ... And here, if any incitement be needed to add to the appeal of beauty and bright eyes, it ought to be abundantly supplied by the nature of the cause appealed to.' [32]

Finally, the attraction of processions was undimmed, and they remained a feature of the charitable year into the twentieth century. Along with prominent societies that retained the annual walk from church to feast, lower down the social scale schools and temperance groups continued to process. [33] Whitsun was a favourite time for religious festivals, paternal treating, school outings, and temperance fetes. [34] As in the processions of endowed school-children, and the fairs and galas of the benefit clubs, the importance of civic tradition and holiday custom was not lost on philanthropic voluntarists seeking public approval. [35]

b) Fund-raising ii): Income patterns

Estimates given in Chapter 3 for the role of voluntarism relative to endowment suggest that their tactics of income generation certainly worked. [36] But within a context of overall growth, several

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30 *FFBJ* 7/5/1814, 4/6/1814, 18/6/1814, and see 11/6/1814 for a letter protesting the ruffianly nature of the victory illuminations which made them unsuitable for women.

31 For the female charity bazaar, F.K.Prochaska *Women and Philanthropy in 19th. Century England* (Oxford, 1980), ch.II; BRL, microfilm, Estlin Papers, Reel 5, *Minute Book of the Bristol and Clifton Auxiliary Ladies Anti-Slavery Society* 1/7/1841, 3/3/1842, 5/5/1842, for their regularly despatch of 'useful, fancy and ornamental articles' to the Massachusets Female Emancipation Society for the annual Boston Bazaar; *Bristol Mercury* 13/3/1858, 24/4/1858 for a bazaar at the Victoria Rooms for the rebuilding of the General Hospital, run by the Mayoress, M.P.'s wives, Mrs Gore Langton and Mrs P.W.S.Miles, and the Rt. Hon. Ladies Isabella Grant and Charlotte Berkeley.

32 *Bristol Mercury* 27/3/1858; for charity 'as a cover for flirtation', see Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., pp.430-1.

33 For early photographic evidence: Temperance Procession, Cheltenham Road, Bristol. c.1902, and Zion Sunday School procession, Two Mile Hill, Kingswood, Bristol. c.1910, see Reece Winstone *Bristol Suburbs Long Ago* (Bristol, 1985) plates 157, 158, 301.

34 *FFBJ* 6/6/1846: a service at St. Mary Redcliffe, specially decorated with rushes and flowers; a country expedition for the pauper children of Bedminster Union finishing in tea and plum cake; a seaside trip for the children of the Cotton Works employees accompanied by 'three bands of music', a parade by children of the Wesleyan schools; a service and distribution of food for the children of St Philips Schools, and a Temperance Fete at the Zoo.

35 For Whitsun customs, see Bob Bushaway *By Rite: Custom, Ceremony and Community in England 1700-1880* (London, 1982), ch. 7; Alun Howkins 'The Taming of Whitsun in nineteenth century Oxfordshire', Eileen and Stephen Yeo ed. *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914: Explorations in the history of labour and leisure* (London, 1981).

36 See above, Chapter 3, note 59.

questions remain. Was the annual subscription really essential to sustaining charitable effort, or was their financing actually more complex ? What factors determined popular enthusiasm for donation to a particular cause ? Fashion ? Concerns of specific age cohorts ? Notions of 'social control' ? Was fund-raising always hampered in years of poor economic performance, or, did temporary surges of distress call forth greater generosity from philanthropists ?

This last problem can be addressed by comparison of trends in six subscription/collection series (*Table 9.2*) with the fluctuations in Bristol's economc fortunes, discussed in Chapter 2. [37] Up until 1810 the increasing income levels accord with the image of a generally prosperous phase for the city. Between 1811 and 1815 these continued to rise, apart from the Dispensary, while the economic indicators began to go in the other direction. This suggests that heightened need *did* call forth more benevolence, or perhaps that the elite made use of the Colston and county charities to promote civic unity and patriotism during wartime. [38] However, in the 1816-20 phase subscription moved in line with the general shape of the city economy, falling almost across the board. As recession deepened it seems, so the charitable purses closed: the formulaic link between generosity and need was not sustained.

This failure of charity in the post-war slump has some important ramifications for the question of the relationship between charity and 'social control', by which I mean the assumption of some historians that philanthropy was used at times to dampen down the flames of insurrection. [39] There is no doubt that the city leadership nursed real fears of revolutionary violence, but this was not addressed through increased philanthropy. [40] It may be argued that the slump led to a shift in spending away from established charities towards those with a greater 'social control' potential, and it is certainly true that the PMFS emerged at this time as the prominent relief organisation. [41]

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37 See above, Chapter 2 b), esp. *Table 2.2.*

38 In the case of the Infirmary the early 19th century rise in subscriptions reflected fund-raising for the building's new west wing.G. Munro Smith op. cit., pp.161-3.

39 Phillip McCann 'Popular education, socialization and social control: Spitalfields 1812-1824' in Phillip McCann ed. *Popular Education and Socialization in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1977); Meg Whittle op. cit., pp.14, 30-1, 46, 55, 76, 106-7, 198-9, 383.

40 PRO HO 41/223/12/1816, Letter to R.H.Crew; HO 42 155, 14-16 Letter from Alderman Daniel, for fears '.. for the safety of the Powder Magazine' and of '..the fury of the Bristol Mob'

41 Meg Whittle op. cit., pp.106-7

Table 9.2: Subscriptions (£), 1800-70, 5 yr. averages, showing percentage variation.

	Infirmary	%	Dispensary	%	Total medical	%	Dolphin	%	Anchor	%	Grateful	%	Gloucestershire	%	Total county/Colston	%
1800-5	2054		562		2616		196		287		190		187		861	
1806-10	2714	*32*	598	*6*	3312	*27*	264	*35*	322	*12*	195	*3*	211	*13*	993	*15*
1811-15	3050	*12*	560	*-6*	3610	*9*	326	*23*	327	*2*	266	*36*	226	*7*	1115	*12*
1816-20	2910	*-5*	545	*-3*	3455	*-4*	315	*-3*	331	*1*	232	*-13*	198	*-12*	1076	*-4*
1821-25	2480	*-15*	598	*10*	3078	*-11*	420	*33*	506	*53*	245	*6*	228	*15*	1398	*30*
1826-30	2441	*-2*	612	*2*	3053	*-1*	440	*5*	535	*6*	373	*52*	284	*25*	1632	*17*
1831-35	2201	*-10*	535	*-13*	2736	*-10*	471	*7*	369	*-31*	342	*-9*	304	*7*	1486	*-9*
1836-40	2027	*-8*	450	*-16*	2477	*-10*	579	*23*	524	*42*	766	*124*	435	*43*	2304	*55*
1841-45	2302	*14*	438	*-3*	2740	*11*	483	*-17*	501	*-4*	417	*-46*	412	*-5*	1812	*-21*
1846-50	2579	*12*	513	*17*	3092	*13*	406	*-16*	430	*-14*	474	*14*	334	*-19*	1644	*-9*
1851-55	2681	*4*	590	*15*	3271	*6*	349	*-14*	442	*3*	664	*40*	283	*-15*	1739	*6*
1856-60	2711	*1*					432	*24*	451	*2*	617	*-7*	274	*-3*	1774	*2*
1861-65	2916	*8*					503	*16*	605	*34*	723	*17*	280	*2*	2110	*19*
1866-70	2856	*-2*					824	*64*	776	*28*	698	*-4*	271	*-3*	2569	*22*

Source: BRO 35893 21 a), b) c) d), e) *The State of the Bristol Infirmary* (1742-1873); BRL B7891 *State of Bristol Dispensary for the Year Ending...* Annual reports 1791-1855; A.B.Beaven *Bristol Lists Municipal and Miscellaneous* (Bristol, 1899), pp.138-165.

However, the logic of the social control thesis would lead us to expect subscriptions to rise in the charities under consideration too, given the channels of personal patronage offered by the medical charities' admission system, and the identification of the Colston and Gloucestershire societies with the civic elite. None of this should imply that a rhetoric of control was absent from some of the charity appeals, nor that the charities played no part in socialization.[42] It does suggest though, that easy linkages between philanthropy and social control cannot be made. In the era of 'demagogues and martyrs' Bristol voluntarism appears to have been restrained by the straitened circumstances of the time, and indeed this was a period in which actual formations of new charities were very few. Of those voluntary groups which can be dated accurately, twenty were formed between 1811 and 1815, against three between 1816 and 1820. Charity income then, could be vulnerable to economic downturns.

Henceforth the relationship between business cycle and charity income becomes increasingly erratic. Through the 1820s and 1830s the collections for the Colston/county societies broadly conformed to the pattern of the city economy, though they began to fall off before the the 1846 downturn. External factors were at work - for example, Tory in-fighting may explain the fall-off in collections for the Dolphin Society at his point. [43] In the bouyant 1820s Infirmary subscription levels slipped back, probably a reflection of subscriber lethargy after the long phase of building work and the sustained income from legacies and investments. [44] The Dispensary's failure in the late-1830s to increase subscriptions can also be explained in these terms, as the decade was a particularly fortunate one for the receipt of legacies. It may also be that the opening of the General Hospital diverted some funds away from the other two medical charities, both in the late-1830s, and 1850s, when economic indicators were generally favourable, although the Colston/county societies were

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42 *FFBJ* 1/1/1814, 12/2/1814 for appeals in this vein from the PMFS and Diocesan Society; for discussion of the theoretical problems of the 'social control' thesis, see Gareth Stedman Jones 'Class Expression versus Social Control ? A Critique of Recent Trends in the Social History of Leisure' in *Languages of Class: studies in English working-class history 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983) and F.M.L.Thompson 'Social Control in Victorian Britain' *Economic History Review* xxxiv, 2, (1981) pp.189-208.

43 See above, Chapter 4 b).

44 BRO 35893/21/ c): while its average subscription continued to fall throughout the 1830s, the Infirmary's average total income was actually slightly higher for that decade than it had been in the 1820s, £7,295, against £6,855

equally flat. Conversely, Infirmary income fell off in the slump of the late 1860s, but the Dolphin and Anchor societies both showed good increases in their totals.

So, while it is sometimes possible to detect a parity between charity income and economic well-being in the wider environment, this is certainly not the rule. Individual charities had their own economic histories, sometimes quite divorced from the trade cycle. The year on year figures also bear this out. It is occasionally possible to find coincidental leaps in peak years, such as the Infirmary subscription level rising by £700 in 1806, or conversely to detect moderate dips in tune with the business troughs, as in 1816. Where sizeable annual shifts are discernible there is always an external reason. For example the massive decreases of the Colston/county societies 1830-1 reflected the shock administered by the Reform Riots, which took place shortly before the annual feasts. [45] The big rise in Infirmary subscriptions 1848-9 was the result of efforts to chase up accumulations of arrears. [46] Again, a huge leap in the Liberal Anchor Society collections 1867-8 arose from political events: a Conservative by-election victory necessitated the wooing of the newly expanded electorate. [47]

The charities just surveyed do not offer a representative sample, and to examine the finances of smaller scale initiatives directed at proselytizing and relieving poverty we must turn to those societies for which only partial series remain (*Table 9.3*, over). These reveal the variety of individual experiences which associations might undergo. The Samaritan Society illustrates the tendency of diminishing returns. After its launch in 1807, the Society attracted a large sum in its first accounting year, no doubt reflecting its cross-sectional appeal to the city's elite and the presence of Richard Reynolds as treasurer. [48] From then on subscription income waned and annual reports regularly lamented the 'insufficiency of their resources' due to 'the decrease of annual subscribers

[45] A.B.Beaven op. cit., pp.140, 143, 146, 163: Dolphin: £352-£210, Anchor: £562 - £220, Grateful: £441-£148, Gloucestershire: £361-£177; for the Reform Riots, John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., pp.146-183.

[46] BRO 35893/21/e): from £2,294 to £3,287.

[47] A.B.Beaven op. cit p.144: increase £575 to £1,000; John Latimer *Annals ... Nineteenth Century* op. cit., pp.439-440, 442: there were almost 7,000 new voters.

[48] BRL B4620 *Bristol Samaritan Society, Its Rules and an Address to the Public* (1807): it was inspired by similar ventures in London, Philadelphia and Lyons; for Reynolds see ch.3 pp.57, 63-4.

Table 9.3 Subscriptions to various charities (£), 1808-70.

year	Domestic Mission	Working & Visiting	Samaritan	Friends Ist Day	Loan Blanket	SPCK
1800						
1801						
1802						
1803						
1804						
1805						
1806						
1807						
1808			1.918			
1809			391			
1810			364			
1811			346			
1812			308			
1813			294			
1814			310			
1815						
1816			254			
1817			252			
1818						
1819			130			
1820			189			
1821			168			
1822			*199*			
1823			191			
1824			183			
1825			166			
1826			161			
1827						
1828			153			
1829			148			
1830			150			
1831			141	21		
1832				21		
1833			132	21		
1834				20		
1835		11	131	20		
1836		16		21		88
1837		16		21		433
1838		16		21		877
1839		17		25		564
1840		21	93	25		752
1841		20		23		913
1842		20		23		731
1843		16		62		1.090
1844		16		58		880
1845		19		73		
1846		18		69		
1847				86		
1848				70		
1849		19		60		
1850	80	16		54		
1851		16		49		
1852		17		49		
1853		14		56		
1854		14		57		
1855		13		65		
1856	93	14		62	88	
1857	100	14		63	38	
1858	103	17		78	52	
1859	109			79	69	
1860	106	16		64	81	
1861	529	15		72	71	
1862	104	16		74	90	
1863	101	16		86	65	
1864	148	17		74	62	
1865	159*	20			76	
1866	115	16		78	91	
1867	114	17		67	135	
1868	114	28		70	137	
1869	111	17		106	156	
1870	120	18		72	161	

Source: BRL B7060-7 *Lewins Mead Domestic Mission Society, Annual Report* 1841-58; BRL B7054-9 *Lewins Mead Chapel Working and Visiting Society Annual Report* 1835-1850; BRL B4621-B4644 *Reports of the Samaritan Society* 1807-14, 1816-17, 1819-26, 1828-31, 1833, 1835, 1840; BRO SF/FD/AR/1a) Friends' First Day School, Annual Reports; BRO P/St Aug/Soc/1a), b) Minute books of Clifton Loan Blanket Society; SPCK: *FFBJ* 25/4/1846.

from death and other causes'. [49] The society's failure to attract new subscribers owed much to faddishness, shaped initially by the social cachet of joining and perceived efficacy, then later undermined by the counter appeal of new ventures.

Charities that could rely on the efforts of particular congregations for their support base had a much firmer opportunity to plan their work, predict their level of activity, and if necessary mobilise for expansion. The core income of the Lewins Mead Domestic Mission and the Working and Visiting Society was annual subscriptions, which remained constant at a little over £100, and between £10 and £20 respectively, while the chapel could also be tapped for extraordinary expenditure. [50] The Friends First Day School planned in the knowledge that local Quakers would maintain support for the venture. After small beginnings expansion followed in the 1840s when old legacy funds were used to buy and restore the Cutlers' Hall, at which point subscription levels rose to around £70 per annum. After this capital investment, surplus subscription monies could go on 'elastic' expenditures such as treats and prizes. [51] In contrast a society like the SPCK, which lacked a congregational mainstay, had extremely erratic income levels, dependent on such factors as the power of visiting speakers to evoke sympathy.

The experience of the Clifton Loan Blanket Society was diametrically opposed to that of the Samaritan Society, enjoying rising levels of support after a modest beginning. Subscribers were predominantly female, so perhaps as well as impressing prospective donors with competent management, it also exerted a social pull over Clifton ladies. [52] An even more extreme illustration of charitable growth irrespective of external events is provided by George Muller's Scriptural Knowledge Institution. Expenditure on orphans rose from £1,664 in 1837-8, to £3,035 in 1851-2, to £8,022 in 1860-1, reaching £20,198 by 1869-70. [53] In 1846-7: 'They went through the winter as

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[49] BRL B4628 *Report of the Samaritan Society for the year 1816*; BRL B4644 *Report of the Samaritan Society for the year 1840.*

[50] BRO 39461/S/2a): eg. in 1860-1 £529 was raised to build a new mission hall.

[51] BRO SF/A10/3b) A.Naish, J.S.Fry, W.Sturge *Some Particulars Concerning the Establishment and Early History of the First-Day Schools conducted by the Society of Friends in Bristol* (1860); SF/FD/AR/1a), see 1839, 1844; BRO SF/MM/6, Minutes of the Bristol Men's Monthly Meeting, 7/3/1848 for decision to redirect charity money to the Cutlers' Hall project.

[52] BRO P/StA/Soc/1a), b), *Minute Books of the Clifton Loan Blanket Society:* 1855-6, £88 was subscribed and 80 blankets lent, 1869-70, £161 subscribed and 616 blankets lent; 66 women subscribed, against sixteen men, nine of whom were local clergy.

[53] G.Frederick Bergin ed. *Autobiography of George Muller, or A Million and a Half in Answer to Prayer* (Bristol 1906), collation of figures from text, passim; totals were recorded here at uneven intervals, so were unsuitable for inclusion in *Table 8.3.*

easily as through any other from the beginning of the work', while another very successful phase was the late 1860s, also a time of difficulty for the city. [54] For Muller supporters 'deeds of Charity were done in secret and without any show', while the emphasis on faith and the power of prayer offered donors the hope of a more direct channel to divine grace. [55]

The evidence therefore suggests that charity income was not dictated by the ebb and flow of the local business cycle, but that voluntary institutions had internal economic histories determined by a range of factors. A major consideration is the extent to which annual subscription was only one of several sources of funds and *Table 9.4* (over) shows the relationship between subscription and total income in those charities whose surviving records permit the comparison. For example, over the sequence Infirmary subscriptions supplied only 29% of total income, those for the Dispensary 46%, and for the Samaritan Society 42%; only in the Domestic Mission did they provide more than half the income, with 57%. Was this typical ? A good many charities relied entirely on collection or subscription once a year, and the lack of sufficient runs of accounts does not allow an estimate of the number with mixed sources of income. Nonetheless there are important implications for our understanding of those that did. For example, despite the failure of its subscription base the Samaritan Society survived thanks to income from an old style endowment of property. [56] More typically a core sum was raised in collection and subscription, then supplemented by either donations alone or donations, legacies and income from stock. [57]

Bristol Infirmary provides the fullest example of mixed funding, which can be viewed in full for the period 1742-1870 in Appendix 7 While subscription was almost always the largest single component of income, large sums were generated by investment of stock. The Infirmary's capital investment in the early nineteenth century took the same form as parochial or corporate investment

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54 Arthur T.Pierson *George Muller of Bristol* (London, 1912) p.221.
55 Ibid., p.327, and Appendix for Muller's thoughts on 'Giving', especially pp.440-5; see also above, Chapter 8 d).
56 Manchee I pp.227-231; *Bristol Mercury* 9/12/1816.
57 An example of the former is the Domestic Mission, see BRO 39461/S/2a), and the of latter, the Dispensary, see BRL B7891 *State of the Bristol Dispensary for the Year Ending*.. passim.

Table 9.4 Totals and Subscriptions (£), selected charities, 1800-70.

year	Infirmary		Domestic Mission		Dispensary		Samaritan Society	
	total	sub	total	sub	total	sub	total	sub
1800	5,405	2.283						
1801	6,320	2.075						
1802	5,088	2.035			861	542		
1803	5,073	1,913						
1804	6,029	1,968			889	568		
1805	14,293	2.051			829	576		
1806	11,745	2,763			1,041	612		
1807	10,419	2,790			967	602		
1808	8,948	2,849			968	593	2,853	1,918
1809	8,120	2,478			2,041	590	541	391
1810	8,968	2.690			1,749	595	950	364
1811	6,692	2,739			1,175	581	629	346
1812	7,849	2,749			1,242	568	453	308
1813	7,090	3,237			1,138	571	475	294
1814	8,163	3,407			1,582	550	633	310
1815	8,732	3,118			1,204	531		
1816	7,006	3,015			1,075	523	1,150	254
1817	9,967	3,351			1,194	523	1,608	252
1818	6,970	2,636			1,125	535		
1819	8,593	3,029			1,184	573	419	130
1820	8,004	2,520			1,240	572	642	189
1821	6,388	2,785			1,266	595	559	168
1822	5,272	1,694			1,344	585	516	199
1823	5,848	3,167			1,218	596	569	191
1824	6,647	2,384			1,339	614	426	183
1825	7,844	2,368			1,106	601	405	166
1826	9,144	2,365			1,025	623	457	161
1827	7,676	2,335			1,054	595		
1828	7,939	2,628			1,243	622	412	153
1829	5,915	2,452			1,221	622	379	148
1830	5,882	2,426			1,005	600	412	150
1831	7,729	2,329			1,994	588	414	141
1832	7,731	2,326			1,640	561		
1833	9,038	2,141			1,149	535	386	132
1834	6,433	2,093			1,476	492		
1835	5,821	2,114			1,402	497	375	131
1836	5,864	1,999			1,211	465		
1837	5,849	1,868			1,256	459		
1838	8,159	1,893			944	442		
1839	8,146	2,203			914	444		
1840	8,186	2,174			933	441	322	93
1841	8,467	2.257			1,114	404		
1842	9,028	2,244			906	421		
1843	8,594	2,317			964	431		
1844	9,282	2,288			1,027	467		
1845	7,242	2,404			1,076	469		
1846	7,723	2,353			993	495		
1847	7,195	2,260			1,044	471		
1848	8,854	2,294			1,026	517		
1849	9,297	3,287			1,086	528		
1850	9,752	2,701	144	80	1,183	553		
1851	11,242	2.451			1,141	532		
1852	11,782	2,570			1,222	571		
1853	10,622	2,631			1.357	581		
1854	12,252	2,816			1,117	617		
1855	15,927	2,939			1,171	647		
1856	7,924	2,086	266	93				
1857	8,868	2,905	155	100				
1858	9,491	2,838	152	103				
1859	11,245	2,810	160	109				
1860	14,118	2,917	187	106				
1861	14,132	2,926	783	529				
1862	8,746	2,942	258	104				
1863	8,142	2,908	202	101				
1864	8,379	2,884	243	148				
1865	9,132	2,918	212*	159*				
1866	11,939	2,935	202	115				
1867	13,199	2,825	231	114				
1868	14,597	2,811	202	114				
1869	17,339	2,846	222	111				
1870	15,580	2,862	213	120				

Source: BRO 35893 21 a), b) c) d), e) *The State of the Bristol Infirmary* (1742-1873); BRL B7060-7 *Lewins Mead Domestic Mission Society, Annual Report* 1841-58; BRL B7891 *State of Bristol Dispensary for the Year Ending...* Annual reports 1791-1855; BRL B4621-B4644 *Reports of the Samaritan Society* 1807-14, 1816-17, 1819-26, 1828-31, 1833, 1835, 1840.

of endowment funds, (ie. consols, Old South Sea Annuities), though hospital trustees were not tied to specific terms of deeds or wills. [58] This meant that projected running costs were met by income from subscription, because patient and subscriber numbers were linked through the admissions system - non-emergency cases required a note from an annual donor to recieve care. [59] Additional income from donations and legacies could be used either to meet additional running costs, or invested to provide yet more short term income or accumulation of funds for building: the total capital invested varied from £22,855 in 1780, to £11,484 in 1795, £59,854 in 1837, £61,451 in 1851, to £28,422 in 1870. [60]

Again, it is unnecessary to look for explanations in the city's economy or in shifts in its social relations, for a subscriber pattern that depended above all on the internal economic history of the charity. The climb in subscriber numbers started in the 1790s, at the same point as the long phase of building work began, and peaked shortly after all the renovations were completed. [61] Subscription income then declined from the 1810s to the early 1840s, reflecting a declining subscriber pool, healthy income from investment, legacies averaging at around £1,000 per annum, and the apparent capacity to accomodate a growing number of out-patients within the existing finances. Only when it was decided in the late 1830s to start another phase of expansion was interest rekindled. [62]

The situation in education offers some parallels, as here too subscriber funding was supplemented, firstly by the contribution of scholars themselves, and secondly by the state. The local Statistical Society Report of 1841 yields the most complete information on rates of parental charge: the average fee for a charity scholar was 1.3d., against 3.8d. for the dame schools and 7.5d. for the common day schools. [63] Assuming that the most meaningful comparison is between the

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[58] See above, Chapter 3 note 75 for the Infirmary's *pro forma* legacy wording, which left trustees free to spend as they saw fit; there were a few specific trusts - Innis' fund for the incurables, Prankerd's endowment of a bed in the Children's Ward (1882) and Mary Cannington's sponsorship of a ward to be named after her uncle (1896), see G.Munro Smith op. cit., pp. 202, 390-1, 414.

[59] BRL B9776 *State of the Bristol Infirmary* (1842): a 2 guinea subscription entitled the donor to have one In-patient and three Out-patients on the books at one time.

[60] BRO 35893/21/ a), d), e).

[61] Ibid.:1792: 570 subscribers, 1814: 1,532 (the peak number), 1837: 820, 1842: 1,041, 1852: 1,181.

[62] G.Munro Smith op. cit., p.282.

[63] A Committee of the Statistical Society, Bristol, 'Statistics of Education in Bristol', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, iv, (October, 1841) pp.250-263.

dame schools and the charity schools, in terms of number of scholars and their social origin, then it seems that in the voluntary sector, 'school pence' covered about a third of the costs and philanthropic funding met the rest. Clearly the parental contribution counted for much more than a token gesture of commitment.

Voluntary gifts by congregations or the National and British and Foreign Societies were also supplemented by the government education grant. This was of course quite negligible at first: Bristolians' individual spending on schooling in 1841, even exclusive of charity, was far in excess of the total United Kingdom education grant. [64] Nonetheless the state had become a significant contributor well in advance of the 1870 Education Act. In 1845-7 Bristol schools received £469 for buildings and £646 for teachers and materials, rising by 1860 to £2,348 for teachers and £465 capitation. [65] Initially the policy was to supplement building funds raised by the National and British and Foreign Schools Societies, but Bristol schools equally took advantage of the offer to fund teaching and supply materials, although the latter were a small component. [66] More significant was the growth of the teaching grants, which provided either for augmentation of teachers' salaries, or payment for 'Apprentices and Teachers for their Instruction'. For example, by 1860 the Redcross St. British School received £66 capitation, and a teaching grant comprising £12 to certified teachers, £55 to Assistant or Probationary teachers, £223 - 15s to Pupil teachers and £52 - 10s 'gratuities' to masters and mistresses. [67]

There was therefore a clear advance of state spending from the late 1840s, which supported the great expansion of voluntary schools in the mid-century by underwriting teaching costs and funding training. Only at the end of the century do Education Returns record the relative sums contributed from public and private sources, and by this time there is no doubt that the intervention of national

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64 Ibid., p.255.

65 PP 1850 xliii, *Schools aided by Parliamentary Grants*, p.clxxxvi, *School Building Grants*, p.xl,xli, *Grants for Fittings Apparatus Books and Maps*, p.lxxxiv, *Annual Grants payable from the Parliamentary Fund*, p.cxiv; PP 1862 xliii, *Return of the Amount of Education Grants paid to each Parish or Place in the Year 1860*; the early beneficiaries were denominational schools such as the Hannah More schools, Lewins Mead, Redcross St, and the ragged school on St. James Back.

66 Ibid.: eg. building funds - St Matthew, £853 from private subscription and £401 from government; materials: the Hannah More schools, £20 for desks, and the two British schools, £18 7s for books and maps.

67 PP 1862 xliii, *Return of the Amount of Education Grants paid to each Parish or Place in the Year 1860* p.18.

and local government had dulled the charitable impulse. [68] Schools in poorer areas, particularly those with a track record of obtaining state funding, now subsisted almost entirely on government grants, with school pence still levied by a few. [69] For example, the Hannah More Schools gained grants of £1,201, with only £131 from school pence, and £9 contributions. Schools with endowed trusts had their grants reduced commensurately, which points up the folly of the trustees of St Nicholas and St Leonard's parish charities, who in 1858 secured a private Act of Parliament to abolish all their parish doles and devote the money instead to the school and the parish almshouses. [70] This well-intentioned manoeuvre effectively succeeded in depriving the parishioners of more than half the income of their old endowments.

To summarise, it is not possible discover a sustained relationship between funding levels and economic fluctuations. [71] While it is improbable that charity finances were entirely unaffected by the economic environment it seems that this affected different charities in different ways. Instead of pointing to general trends the Bristol evidence highlighted the importance of internal or 'institution-specific' factors in determining income and expenditure; these included the degree of capitalisation, reaction to other sources of funding, charismatic leadership, the social appeal of joining, and public image. It also showed that the heyday of the Infirmary and the voluntary schools as specifically subscriber institutions was brief. Once the initial capital investment had been found from the philanthropist's purse, these ventures took on an institutional life of their own, distanced from the direct aspirations of the provincial middle classes which had spawned them.

The weaknesses of voluntarism as a means of providing sustained, reliable funding for public needs became all too apparent in charities which remained heavily dependent on subscription.

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[68] PP 1894 lxv *Return for each public school examined etc. for the year ended 31st. August 1893* pp.186-9, 202-3;, there were exceptions among the denominational schools, Clifton and St George's, Brandon Hill, where donors still made a difference, to the tune of 32% of total income in the former and 25% in the latter

[69] Ibid., the Return listed 55 denominational schools (27 National, 8 Church, 6 Roman Catholic, 4 Wesleyan, 3 British, 3 Parochial, 2 unrecorded) of which 28 levied 'school pence' and eighteen board schools, of which seven levied 'school pence'; income totals were made up from a variety of other sources, such as minor surcharges made for books and equipment, and endowment, which 22 denominational benefitted from; of these most are fairly trivial sums, but there were a few whose endowments made a major contribution, such as St Luke's Bedminster, 59% of total income, St Nicholas and St Leonard, 51%, St Silas', 34%, Temple Church, Colston's, 15%, and St James and St Paul Benevolent Schools, 13%.

[70] *Bristol Mercury* 17/7/1858 for the Bill, which reached the Commons 10/6/1858; it was justified on the grounds that the doles 'greatly demoralised and pauperised' the parishioners and charity income should therefore be directed at education instead.

[71] For a more general assertion of this position, see Sandra Cavallo 'The Motivations of Benefactors: An overview of approaches to the study of charity', Jonathan Barry and Colin Jones ed. *Medicine and Charity Before the Welfare State* (London, 1991) esp. p.49.

Trends in fund-raising fashions and the fluctuating popularity of particular causes were of great importance, as witnessed by the enthusiasm for establishing women's committees if one was to vie successfully with the competition. [72] Some regarded the 'marketing' aspect of philanthropy with disdain: 'Excitement, probably, had something to do with it, and it might be fashion, for whenever Dame Fashion could be brought to patronise an institution it was sure to do', lamented Reverend Luke, in a year of failing support the Deaf and Dumb Institute. [73] Competiton for the philanthropic gift was eloquently attacked by John Addington Symonds when he compared the £7,000 given to foreign missions with the £772 donated to the General Hospital's rebuilding campaign in 1858:

> 'We are so liberal and beneficent that we can fling our largess *(sic)* broadcast towards those far-off sable and tawny races, ... and we comparatively overlook our own brethren...'. The General, by contrast, had '...few novelties connected with it. No striking recital of romantic enterprise and daring adventures; no interesting pictures of strange races and curious customs; no terrific descriptions of savage cruelties and hideous abominations of devil-worship ... no ladies auxiliaries; no juvenile collectors'. [74]

Not only did Symonds puncture the rhetoric with which missionary charities played on British imaginations of the foreign. He also laid bare the way in which, by its very nature, voluntary subscription acted against rational planning and informed debate over priorities of public spending. [75]

c) Expenditure: evaluating efficacy

How successful were voluntary charities in dealing with the problems which they set out to tackle ? They themselves regularly trumpeted their achievement, but crude figures of growing numbers of recipients tell us everything and nothing. For example, in 1840 John B. Estlin treated

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[72] See above, section a).

[73] *Bristol Mercury* 19/6/1858; see also *Bristol Gazette* 15/9/1836, *FFBJ* 12/9/1846 for similar complaints from the Reynolds Commemoration Society; see also Margaret Simey *Charity Rediscovered: A Study of Philanthropic Effort in Nineteenth-Century Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1992), first published as *Charitable Effort in Liverpool in the Nineteenth Century* (1951)pp.56, 82-3.

[74] *Bristol Mercury* 8/5/1858; this was rather unfair to the Ladies Committee, which had just raised over £500 at their bazaar ! Symonds' sentiments may have been shaped by Charles Dickens' satirical portrayal of Mrs Jellyby in *Bleak House* (1853), which ridiculed 'telescopic philanthropy'.

[75] R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit., p.298 aptly characterises voluntary society finances as 'crisis managment'.

2,151 patients at his Eye Dispensary, the majority of whom suffered ophthalmia, inflammation of the cornea, inflammation of the lids, or defective vision. [76] The rate of success is not recorded, but even if it were 100% this would still leave questions unanswered. What proportion of patients would otherwise have been able to obtain the same service from the market ? Given that patients came from far afield, what sort of impression did the Dispensary make on the scale of the problem in the area which it served ? To what extent did the two half-days a week Estlin devoted to his charitable work also serve to establish his reputation as an ophthalmic surgeon and win him wealthy clients for his private practice ?

It is possible to glimpse the achievements of the charitable in personal records. For example, Estlin kept a scrapbook of letters from grateful patients which leave no doubt of his capacity to transform peoples' lives for the better. [77] However, we can equally point to examples of recipients who did not evince appreciation. What should we make of John Board, a casualty patient of the Infirmary in 1815, who was lent a cotton shirt during his stay which he was allowed to wear home, then when asked to return it, sent it back to Matron 'torn into Strips' ? [78] Or Mary Rider, who had spent two years in the Girl's Reformatory and was then taken on as a servant in Mary Carpenter's own house, only to abscond shortly after, stealing a silk mantle and various items of clothing ? [79] Such contrary examples serve to remind that the feelings of recipients of charity are a historical blank which cannot be filled with easy assumptions about the beneficial effects of philanthropy on society.

One possible approach is to use the statistics compiled from 1838 by the Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths, which can offer crude indicators of the efficacy of educational and medical charity through the information they yield on literacy rates and death rates. Of course, many variables combined to diminish illiteracy and mortality in the latter half of the nineteenth century,

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[76] BRL RLSA B32045 Papers of J.B. and Mary Estlin, Box 3, *Dispensary for the Cure of Complaints in the Eyes, Twenty-Eighth Annual Report, for the Year 1840*, p.1.
[77] Ibid., Box 1, letter-book from eye-patients.
[78] BRO 35893/2/e) Bristol Infirmary, *Weekly Committee Minute Book* 8/3/1815.
[79] *Bristol Mercury* 14/8/1858; see also *FFBJ* 5/9/1846 for a recipient pawning Dorcas Society articles.

but it is possible to 'factor out' the role of voluntary charity and conduct a comparative examination of its impact.

First literacy, whose progress can be measured by calculating the annual proportion of brides and grooms signing the marriage register with a mark. [80] In England and Wales the illiteracy rate fell from 41% in 1840-1, to 24% in 1870, to 8% in 1890, while Bristol's experience was rather better than the nation as a whole: 34% in 1840-1, 19% in 1870, and 7% in 1890. [81] Given the city's impressive number of educational foundations in the nineteenth century, does this constitute a vindication of charity ? *Table 9.5* (over) sets Bristol's experience against that of 21 large English towns. The rank order of each for literacy levels in 1850 and 1866 is shown, the first date coinciding with the 1851 Education Census, and the second to show the situation some fifteen years after the census, when the cohort at school at the time of the enumeration was appearing in the marriage registers. [82] This is then put in the context of longer term population movements, with highest rankings equating with the slowest growth rates. In the remaining columns the towns are ranked according to the numbers of scholars recorded in the census as a proportion of the town's population, showing firstly the total attending day schools, then the percentages in public and private schools. The next three columns break down the public schools into endowed and voluntary establishments, while the 'other' category takes in ragged schools, orphan asylums, institutions for the disabled, and so on; Sunday scholars are shown in the final column. Here the highest rankings equate with the highest proportions of scholars to population.

In terms of literacy rankings there is no great change in the more successful towns between 1850 and 1866. Apart from Brighton there is a strong showing of England's old established urban

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80 Michael Sanderson *Education, Economic Change and Society in England, 1780-1870* (London 1983) ch.1 surveys the historiography of this subject; key works are Lawrence Stone 'Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900', *Past and Present*, 42, (1969) pp.69-139, David Vincent *Literacy and Popular Culture in England 1750-1914* (Cambridge, 1989) esp. pp.73-94, and R.S.Schofield 'Dimensions of Illiteracy 1750-1850', *Explorations in Economic History*, 10, 4 (1973) pp.437-457; W.B.Stephens *Education, Literacy and Society 1830-70* (Manchester, 1987) is a comprehensive assessment of regional literacy patterns.

81 All calculations based on the *Annual Report of the Registrar-General* for relevant years; Bristol figures include those for Clifton and Bedminster.

82 For the argument that ten was typically the latest age of elementary school attendance see Beryl Madoc Jones 'Patterns of attendance and their social significance: Mitcham National School 1830-1839', Phillip McCann ed. op. cit., pp.50-1; for 25/26 as the average age of marriage in the mid-century, N.L.Tranter *Population and Society 1750-1940* (London 1985) p.52.

Table 9.5 Illiteracy levels: Rank Order of Large towns, Literacy, Population, Scholars

Town	*literacy*		*growth rate of population*		*% of scholars to total population, 1851 by category of school:*						
	1850	*1866*	*1801-51*	*1851-81*	*total*	*public*	*private*	*endowed*	*voluntary*	*other*	*Sunday*
Brighton	1	1	21	9	2	7	3	19	8	4	20
Bath	2	2	1	1	1	1	14	12	1	9	14
Hull	3	3	8	15	6	12	4	14	12	15	18
Bristol	4	5	4	8	3	3	7	4	5	2	10
Plymouth	5	4	5	5	15	19	10	11	20	1	17
Norwich	6	7	2	4	9	6	13	5	4	11	15
Salford	7	16	17	20	20	18	20	21	10	21	9
Newcastle-upon Tyne	8	6	6	10	11	11	9	1	18	10	19
Sunderland	9	13	7	16	7	16	1	2	17	14	12
Leicester	10	8	14	17	17	10	19	16	13	7	8
Leeds	11	10	11	14	4	4	5	10	6	6	7
Birmingham	12	12	12	11	14	15	11	6	16	12	16
Nottingham	13	9	3	21	12	13	8	8	14	16	11
Liverpool	14	14	18	7	5	2	21	13	3	8	21
Sheffield	15	15	9	19	8	8	6	3	7	18	13
Manchester	16	11	15	3	18	17	18	17	11	19	6
Stockport	17	20	10	2	19	21	2	20	21	3	2
Preston	18	21	19	6	10	5	16	15	2	20	5
Bradford	19	17	20	13	16	14	15	18	15	5	4
Bolton	20	18	13	12	13	9	17	7	9	17	1
Oldham	21	19	16	18	21	20	12	9	19	13	3

Source: Registrar General's Reports, 1850, 1866; 1851 *Census of Great Britain. Education Report (England and Wales)*

centres: of the ten most literate towns in 1850 five had been amongst the top twenty large towns in 1662, while the least literate places are those northern industrial towns whose rapid growth only took off in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. [83] Rate of population growth appears to be an important factor in the success or failure of urban educational efforts, with slower growth rates before 1851 shown by those towns where literacy was greater. There are anomalies such as Brighton, with an illiteracy level almost half the national average alongside substantial population increase, and Nottingham whose expansion was more moderate before the mid-century, but whose illiteracy rates were just over that for the country as a whole. Slowing rates of population increase after 1851 might coincide with rising literacy 1851-1866 (Manchester), or relative stagnation (Liverpool), or a failure to improve ranking against other towns with higher growth (Stockport, Preston); rising population rates after 1851 might correspond with a slip in literacy ranking (Salford), but also might not (Newcastle). Bristol was one of those towns, like Bath, Leeds, Plymouth, Birmingham and Manchester, whose success in educating its citizens seems likely to have been related in part to its demographic experience. It ranked fourth in literacy levels of large towns in 1850, having enjoyed the fourth lowest rate of population growth up to 1851, then slipped back one place in the ranking by 1866, as it numbers started to increase at a faster pace.

Illiteracy was also influenced by the extent of day school provision. Three of the four most literate towns, one of which was Bristol, were amongst the four towns with the best ratios of scholars to population, while the most illiterate town of the sample, Oldham, also had the lowest number of day scholars. Again, anomalies abound, such as those with good ratios of scholars to population, such as Leeds and Liverpool, hampered by their rates of demographic increase from translating provision into literacy ranking. The relative importance of public and private education does not appear to have been an important issue. High levels of public schooling might coincide with high literacy rankings (Bristol, Bath and Norwich), or they might not (Liverpool). Lower levels of public provision (Hull, Plymouth) could co-exist with lower illiteracy. By the same token, private

[83] Town size ranking in 1662 as calculated from hearth tax returns as an indicator of population size, see W.G.Hoskins *Local History in England* (1959), 3rd. edn. London, 1984 pp.278-9: the five are Norwich, Bristol, Newcastle, Hull, Plymouth.

schooling appears to have been significant to achievement in some areas (Brighton, Hull), but not in others (Stockport, Sheffield), although since this category embraced everything from expensive academies to dame schools it is difficult to assess in detail. Again, Bristol was comparatively well served by its private sector.

Breaking down the public schools into their constituent categories we can at last isolate the voluntary schools as a contributary force to literacy. The rankings reveal no consistent correlation between high levels of denominational schooling and high levels of literacy. Charity schools *could* be important (Bath, Bristol, Norwich), but other areas which were well served by the voluntary sector (Preston, Liverpool) were lower on the literacy scale: in Preston for example, illiteracy levels ran at 57% in 1850 and 46% in 1866, more than 15% points above the national average. Nor can a formula linking high literacy to good voluntary provision coupled with low population growth be applied: both Plymouth and Hull had higher literacy, slower growth rates and *poorer* charity provision. Cities with more substantial proportions of endowed scholars (Bristol and Newcastle) enjoyed an additional benefit in the combination of factors contributing to literacy, but as Sheffield's experience shows, the numbers were too small to be instrumental. A similar verdict must be reached for 'others', although it is interesting that three of the five most literate towns were well provided in this respect - Brighton, like Bristol, was well served with ragged schools, and Plymouth had two large non-religious subscription schools.

Finally Sunday schools, where there was a close inverse relationship between numbers of Sunday scholars and literacy ranking, to the extent that the six towns with the highest illiteracy were also the six with the highest Sunday school ratios. This suggests the importance of regional variations in work and the influence of child labour and occupational concerns on the aspiration to literacy. In the textile towns, where industrialization had increased the opportunities for children to contribute a wage to the family budget, the thirst for education during leisure time was slaked by the Sunday schools, yet they were unable to raise literacy levels significantly. [84] The inverse relationship

[84] W.B.Stephens (1987) op. cit., pp.26-7, 38-9.

between day and Sunday scholars seen elsewhere was less pronounced in Bristol, perhaps reflecting the strength of non-conformity.

A comparison between the large English towns therefore shows that the extent of voluntary schooling available was only one factor amongst many in determining a town's success in educating its citizens. *Table 9.6* summarizes the findings by expressing the relationship between several variables as rank correlation coefficients. [85] These suggest that for the sample as a whole the percentage of total day scholars was of greater significance than the percentage in public (ie. charity) schools, and that the extent of child labour (shown by the strong correlation between illiteracy and Sunday school attendance) was more important than rates of population growth.

Table 9.6 Variables affecting literacy, 21 large towns.

	rank correlation coefficient
1850 literacy / % public scholars	0.3
1866 literacy / % public scholars	0.33
1850 literacy / % total scholars	0.57
1850 literacy / 1801-51 population growth	0.45
1850 literacy / % Sunday scholars	-0.7

Source: as *Table 9.5*

Other salient forces not captured here were migration patterns, the age structure of the town, popular perceptions of the utility of literacy, for work, political awareness and leisure, differing attitudes to girls' and boys' schooling, and so on. [86]

In Bristol charity was just one of several favourable agents contributing to effective education. Relatively slow population growth allowed day-school provision to keep pace with demand, older endowed schools supported the contribution of the newer charities, and there was also a strong

[85] I thank Roger Middleton for his advice on the arrangement of the data.
[86] Idem. 'Literacy Studies: A Survey' W.B.Stephens ed. *Studies in the History of Literacy: England and North America* (Leeds 1983) pp.2-3.

private sector role. Popular aspirations to literacy for work and leisure were strong among Bristol artisans. [87] John Campbell's analysis of St Philip and St Jacob marriage registers, 1840-1890, demonstrates conclusively that literacy was higher in occupations like trades and services, woodwork, and engineering, where education had a functional utility. [88] By contrast, masons and unskilled workers, who lacked either functional or cultural motivation were only pushed towards full literacy by the compulsory trends in local schooling at the end of the century. [89]

Does this artisan approval of education provide qualitative evidence for the success of Bristol charity schooling which the quantitative method cannot catch ? Not necessarily, for as Philip Gardner has persuasively argued, in a study based on Bristol, the extent and efficacy of working class private schools has been under-estimated by historians swayed by the writings of Victorian officials intent of denigrating the reputation of 'dame-schooling'. [90] The expansion of charity schooling in the city occurred at the expense of cheap private venture schools and this may even have had a detrimental effect. [91] In the suburb of Bedminster, where, by contrast, the proportion of private scholars had increased in the 1850s, literacy rose faster than in both the city and Clifton. [92] This hints, in line with Gardner's claims, that the teaching in the more intimate dame schools was equally effective. [93] There were other potential costs of the shift in provision. For example, the ratios of boys to girls was more equal in private schools than in public. [94] Lastly we should note that a substantial number of children of school age (5-15 years) did not attend any establishment, to the

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87 *Reports of the Royal Commisson of Popular Education* (Newcastle Commission) PP 1861 xxi II p.21 for '..the zeal of its inhabitants for education'; John Bennet, untitled manuscript, BRO 36097 (b), (Portishead, 1858), typescript copy, pp. 2, 11: for a local carpenter's recommendation that aspiring builders learn '..geometry, architectural drawing, perspective and the use of lines'; Rev. Edmund Butcher *An Excursion form Sidmouth to Chester* (London 1805) pp.72-3, for the intelligence of a local glass-house worker; *12th Annual Report Domestic Mission Society* (1851) pp.14-15 for a shoemaker earning seven shillings a week, yet well-read in Shakespeare and Byron

88 John Campbell 'Occupation and Literacy in Bristol and Gloucestershire, 1755-1870', in W.B.Stephens ed. (1983) op. cit., p.22; I assume that the literacy rates in the table which I cite are male, though Campbell does not state this.

89 Ibid., for example, Woodworkers, % literate: 1840, 79%; 1870, 88%; 1890, 100%; Labourers: 1840, 34%; 1870, 51%; 1890, 80%.

90 Philip W.Gardner *The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England* (London, 1984).

91 See Appendix 6, *Table 8a.3.*

92 Bedminster private schools, Newcastle Commission III p.82, cited in W.B.Stephens (1987) op. cit., p.255; % illiterate: Bristol: 1850, 29%, 1860, 24%, 1870, 21%; Clifton: 1850, 25%, 1860, 24%, 1870, 17%; Bedminster: 1850, 28%, 1860, 21%, 1870, 14%.

93 Philip W.Gardner op. cit., ch.5; see *Bristol Mercury* 11/1/1868 for Ann Parfitt, who spent six years at St James Back Ragged School without learning to read.

94 Education surveys, see note 89, show that in 1841 were 57/43 in the public schools and 47/53 in the private, and in 1851, 57/43 in public schools, against 50/50 in the private

tune of 40% in 1841, 34% in 1851, and 19% in 1871. [95] And, as shown in the discussion of funding, the charity schools' heyday as providers was brief; they were soon superseded by board schools and only then were regional and occupational pockets of illiteracy eradicated. [96]

In the area of medical charity scepticism about the contribution of voluntary institutions to public health is well ingrained in the historiography. The starting point was McKeown's attack on the 'parade of virtue' narrative of the contribution made by medical science to declining mortality; in its place he stressed the importance of improved sanitation and, crucially, rising nutritional standards. [97] Subsequent interventions have refined this view with a closer attention to variations of regional experience and of particular diseases, stressing in some cases the role of sewerage and fresh water, in others improvement in housing, in others variation in migration patterns, and others again the impact of controls on food and milk. [98] These and other developments in the social history of medicine have provoked a much more critical attitude to nineteenth century hospitals, regarded by some as 'gateways to death' or repressive institutions of the 'great confinement'. [99]

Table 9.7 presents Bristol's mortality rates 1841-80, set both in the context of nation and region, and in the comparative perspective of the same sample of large provincial towns used to analyse literacy. It shows the city's experience of mortality was a good deal worse than that of the country at large, and also of the region. Of course, the urban/rural distinction was quickly grasped by contemporaries, and the Registrar-General brought home the point by setting death rates per 1,000 against population density, also shown in the Table. [100] These demonstrate clearly the

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95 1841: 'Statistics of Education in Bristol', op. cit., p.256; 1851: Education Census, Census of Population; 1871: BRO Bristol School Board, Minute Book No.1, Bristol School Board Educational Census, p.56.

96 W.B.Stephens (1987) op. cit., Conclusion.

97 Thomas McKeown *The Modern Rise of Population* (London, 1976) pp.13-14, particularly ch. 5.'

98 Robert Woods and John Woodward ed. *Urban Disease and Mortality in Nineteenth Century England* (London, 1984); Simon Szreter's revisionist account 'The Importance of Social Intervention in Britain's Mortality Decline c. 1850-1914: a Re-interpretation of the Role of Public Health' *Social History of Medicine* 1, (1988) pp.1-37 reasserts the importance of the public health movement; see also Anne Hardy *The Epidemic Streets: infectious diseases and the rise of preventive medicine, 1856-1900* (Oxford, 1993); Anthony S.Wohl *Endangered Lives* (London, 1983); for Bristol, David Large and Frances Round's *Public Health in mid-Victorian Bristol* (Bristol, 1974) is firmly in the sanitary reformers' camp and ends with a ringing call for local government intervention.

99 These phrases originate with K.F.Helleiner and Michel Foucault; an example of the former approach can be found in F.B.Smith *The People's Health 1830-1910* (London, 1979) pp.249-284, which is rich in anecdotal horror stories; Mary Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., pp.11-12, ch.10, acknowledges Foucauldian influences on her study of the Bristol Infirmary.

100 *Supplement to the Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England* (London, 1864) pp.xxxiii-xxxv.

Table 9.7 Mortality Rates in Bristol, 1841-80, in comparative perspective

	Mortality deaths per. 1000						density	Population rank orders:		
	1841-50	1851-60	*mean 1841-60*	1861-70	1871-80	*change 1861-70/1871-80*	(acres to a person) mean 1841-60	size: 1861 *1=largest*	growth rates: 1801-51 *1=slowest*	1851-81
England and Wales	22	22	*22*	22	21.3	*0.7*	2.09			
Gloucestershire	22	21	*21*	21	19.8	*1.2*	3.24			
Somersetshire	20	20	*20*	20	19.1	*0.9*	2.29			
Towns:										
Liverpool	36	33	*34*	39	33.6	*5.4*	0.01	1	18	7
Manchester	33	31	*32*	33	32.9	*0.1*	0.06	3	15	3
Leeds	30	28	*29*	30	26	*4.0*	0.02	4	11	14
Hull	31	25	*28*	26	24.5	*1.5*	0 04	11	8	15
Bristol	***29***	***28***	***28***	***29***	***25.5***	*3.5*	***0.03***	***6***	***4***	***8***
Sheffield	27	28	*28*	29	27.4	*1.6*	0.10	5	9	19
Salford	28	26	*27*	27	27.7	*-0.7*	0.06	10	17	20
Newcastle-upon Tyne	27	27	*27*	28	25.9	*2.1*	0.08	8	6	10
Birmingham	26	27	*27*	27	25.8	*1.2*	0.02	2	12	11
Nottingham	26	27	*27*	27	24	*3.0*	0.03	16	3	21
Bolton	27	27	*27*	26	24.3	*1.7*	0.39	18	13	12
Leicester	27	25	*26*	26	24.5	*1.5*	0.07	19	14	17
Stockport	25	26	*26*	25	24.7	*0.3*	0.34	20	10	2
Preston	25	27	*26*	28	28.1	*-0.1*	0.72	12	19	6
Bradford	25	26	*26*	25	23.9	*1.1*	0.24	9	20	13
Norwich	24	25	*25*	24	23.3	*0.7*	0.07	15	2	4
Sunderland	24	25	*25*	24	24	*0*	0.17	13	7	16
Oldham	26	25	*25*	26	25.1	*0.9*	0.19	17	16	18
Plymouth	25	24	*24*	23	22.6	*0.4*	0.04	7	5	5
Bath	24	22	*23*	22	21.5	*0.5*	0.44	21	1	1
Brighton	21	22	*22*	22	20.5	*1.5*	0.04	14	21	9

Source: 'Supplement to the Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General' (1864)

Source: *Supplement to the Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England* (London, 1864) pp.xxxviii-lvi; *Supplement to the Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England* (London, 1875) pp.clxxxvii-ccvii; *Supplement to the Forty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England* (London, 1885) pp.lxviii-lxxxiii.

correspondence between rank order of density and mortality rate, even if the relationship was not absolutely uniform. The Table also shows the influence of population, with the overall size of the town and the rates of growth conforming closely to the density factor. Slower growth in Bath and Norwich can explain their comparatively favourable death rates, though Norwich's greater density makes its slightly higher mortality less surprising. At the other end of the scale, Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Leeds and Hull all shared high density, large overall size and high growth rates, either before or after 1851.

What was Bristol's place in all this ? If mortality rates are a fair indicator of public health, then the city centre was indisputably one of the nation's most dangerous areas in the mid-century: in the 1840s, out of 623 registration districts in England and Wales, only five had a mortality rate as high as Bristol's, and only seven exceeded it. [101] As one of Britain's largest cities, with heavy overcrowding, this should come as no surprise, though it is interesting that demographic pressure was relatively low. [102] In the period surveyed in *Table 9.7* a significant reduction of mortality occurred only in the 1870s, and a comparison of rates of change experienced by other towns reveals that this was on a scale matched only by Liverpool.

So, despite Bristol's '...number, magnitude, and diversity of its benevolent institutions...' which '...provide relief for almost every description of Distress, Sickness &c.', and its particularly favourable ratio of doctors to head of population, its citizens were comparatively disadvantaged. [103] Another measure is infant death-rates, and here again it appears that the Dispensaries and the various Dorcas and lying-in societies were unable to ameliorate exceptional mortality: in 1845 the death rate per 1000 live births of Bristol children under one year was 160, compared to 142

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[101] The other districts with mortality at 29 per 1000 persons living, were West London, Whitechapel, St George in the East, Alverstoke, and East Stonehouse (the last two were host to military/naval hospitals); areas with rates of 30 per 1000, or more, were Liverpool, Leeds, Hull, Manchester, and three Southwark districts. It is important to note that this mortality rate is that of the Bristol registration district, excluding Clifton and Bedminster, both of which covered part of the city; the rates in these districts were much closer to county means, eg. for 1841-50 and 1851-60, Clifton 23 and 20, Bedminster, 20 and 20 respectively. While on the one hand the geography of registration exaggerates the mortality of the city as a whole, it also points up the disastrous situation in the old central area.

[102] Population figures given here relate to the whole urban cluster, while the registration district was actually equivalent to the old city, which, it will be recalled, began to experience a net outflow of population in the 1860s.

[103] Quotes: Trade Directories for 1831 and 1841; ratios, see Irvine Loudon op. cit., Appendices IV & V: in 1841 Bristol's ratio of doctors to population was 1:582, compared to - 1:910, England and Wales; 1:1,000, Birmingham; 1:893, Manchester; 1:807 Liverpool; in terms of county ratios, Gloucester's was 1:880, bettered only by Middlesex, at 1:402.

nationally, rising by 1875 to 173 compared to 158. [104] Possibly the charities' tendency to encourage childbirth attendance by doctors rather than midwives added to the danger when the delivery did not go smoothly. [105]

Can a closer examination of the causes of death reveal any more about the relative contribution of medical philanthropy to the health of Bristolians ? *Table 9.8* (over) compares cause of death over three decades, 1851-1880, in Bristol, Clifton and Bedminster, showing both the total number of deaths and the rate per thousand living. [106] Sub-totals are given for infectious diseases according to mode of transmission, while non-communicable diseases are also sub-divided by organ and miscellaneous causes. [107] Deaths from non-communicable disease rose slightly over the sequence; no very clear pattern emerges, although an increase in kidney disease and respiratory affliction is noticeable. However, Bristol, Clifton and Bedminster experienced a steady fall in mortality from diseases spread by micro-organisms, and it is to this that we must look to explain the downward trend in mortality over the time series.

In 1861-70 the drop was most noticeable in the categories of water/food borne disease and other infections; the latter is likely to have included enteric fever, which was only listed separately from 1871-80, so probably the fall in this category is understated. This coincides with the Corporation's extensive programme of arterial sewer building, begun in 1855, continuing into the next decade as more and more house drains were connected to the main sewer, and probably contributing to the

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104 *Annual Report of the Registrar General, 1845* pp.254-7, 1875 pp.134-5; Clifton and Bedminster rates were in 174 and 145 in 1845, and 159 and 152 in 1875.

105 See F.B.Smith op. cit., p.55 and ch.1 passim.; as far as maternal mortality is concerned, Bristol mortality registration did not begin to disaggregate deaths from puerperal fever from 'other zymotic diseases' until the 1870s, so rates from this aspect of child-bearing mortality cannot be surveyed in the mid-century; deaths from childbirth itself fell slightly in Bristol between 1851 and 1880, though they rose in both Clifton and Bedminster in the 1860s.

106 *Table 9.8* shows the total mortality rate for Bristol in 1861-70 as 27, not 29 as shown in *Table 9.7*; this is because the Registrar's mortality tables made an adjustment for Bristol paupers dying in the city workhouse in Clifton, but the cause of death tables did not. This does not minimise the progress made in the 1870s, but it does necessitate considering the experience of Bristol and Clifton together, since it is impossible to be certain whether the infection was contracted in the city itself or the area of the workhouse; see *Supplement to the Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General* (London, 1875), p.cc; the other implication of course, is that the Bristol death rate may be artificially inflated for 1861-70 by up to two points..

107 The classification is adapted from that employed in Thomas McKeown op. cit., ch.3; see ibid., p.53 in particular for the problems associated with reliablity of the Registrar-General's data; see also Robert Woods 'Mortality and sanitary conditions in late nineteenth-century Birmingham' and Marilyn E.Pooley and Colin G.Pooley 'Health, Society and environment in Victorian Manchester', both in Robert Woods and John Woodward ed. *Urban Disease and Mortality in Nineteenth Century England* (London, 1984), pp.157-9, 180-1, for other approaches to developing time-series from this source.

Table 9.8 Causes of Death, Bristol and suburbs, rates (per 1000 of mean decadal population) and totals.

Cause of Death:	1851-60 Bristol rate	Bristol total	Clifton rate	Clifton total	Bedminster rate	Bedminster total	1861-70 Bristol rate	Bristol total	Clifton rate	Clifton total	Bedminster rate	Bedminster total	1871-80 Bristol rate	Bristol total	Clifton rate	Clifton total	Bedminster: rate	Bedminster: total
Attributable to micro-organisms																		
Airborne:																		
Small-pox	*0.40*	266	*0.20*	175	*0.27*	109	*0.24*	152	*0.21*	238	*0.16*	78	*0.21*	124	*0.19*	282	*0.13*	77
Measles	*0.55*	361	*0.53*	457	*0.42*	168	*0.73*	467	*0.52*	583	*0.48*	229	*0.4*	239	*0.43*	631	*0.37*	226
Scarlet fever	*0.99*	649	*0.89*	765	*0.92*	366	*1.27*	819	*1.22*	1361	*0.85*	406	*0.63*	377	*0.59*	872	*0.85*	517
Diptheria	*0.07*	48	*0.07*	61	*0.06*	22	*0.18*	119	*0.10*	113	*0.13*	60	*0.11*	65	*0.07*	96	*0.09*	56
Whooping cough	*0.57*	376	*0.44*	377	*0.42*	166	*0.70*	448	*0.53*	590	*0.43*	204	*0.53*	317	*0.53*	780	*0.59*	355
Phthisis	*3.22*	2123	*2.55*	2204	*1.97*	782	*2.84*	1830	*2.30*	2560	*1.77*	841	*2.49*	1493	*2.13*	3130	*1.57*	950
	5.80		**4.68**		**4.06**		**5.96**		**4.89**		**3.82**		**4.37**		**3.94**		**3.60**	
Water/food borne:																		
Cholera, diahorrea, dyssentry	*1.30*	859	*1.28*	1101	*0.72*	286	*1.16*	746	*0.97*	1077	*0.67*	317	*0.93*	558	*0.78*	1130	*0.76*	456
Enteric fever													*0.36*	219	*0.32*	465	*0.32*	195
Scrofula, Tabes Mesenterica	*0.63*	417	*0.47*	406	*0.30*	118	*0.48*	310	*0.34*	380	*0.36*	170	*0.36*	216	*0.37*	545	*0.35*	209
Hydrocephalus	*0.36*	236	*0.32*	276	*0.29*	114	*0.33*	213	*0.34*	380	*0.32*	152	*0.34*	202	*0.43*	634	*0.34*	204
	2.30		**2.07**		**1.30**		**1.97**		**1.65**		**1.34**		**1.99**		**1.90**		**1.77**	
Other infectious:																		
Typhus	*0.97*	642	*0.84*	729	*0.79*	313	*0.93*	599	*0.83*	921	*0.71*	336	*0.03*	20	*0.04*	58	*0.03*	21
Other infections	*0.89*	589	*0.60*	517	*0.68*	270	*0.60*	383	*0.40*	444	*0.46*	217						
Simple continued fever													*0.04*	24	*0.03*	86	*0.21*	125
Puerperal fever													*0.07*	42	*0.06*	87	*0.06*	39
	1.87		**1.44**		**1.47**		**1.53**		**1.23**		**1.16**		**0.14**		**0.13**		**0.30**	
Non-attritutable to micro-organisms																		
Diseases of:																		
Nervous system	*3.05*	2008	*2.57*	2219	*2.59*	1030	*2.88*	1850	*2.79*	3113	*2.57*	1223	*3.03*	1822	*2.78*	4092	*2.02*	1591
Circulatory "	*1.49*	979	*1.10*	946	*1.22*	485	*1.38*	891	*1.15*	1278	*1.27*	602	*1.64*	986	*1.21*	1856	*1.4*	843
Respiratory "	*4.79*	3158	*3.80*	3283	*3.36*	1333	*4.79*	3079	*3.69*	4105	*3.61*	1717	*5.23*	3142	*3.63*	5333	*3.87*	2347
Digestive "	*1.08*	714	*0.93*	800	*1.10*	436	*1.07*	689	*0.80*	888	*0.90*	427	*1.04*	627	*0.81*	1194	*0.81*	489
Urinary "	*0.42*	277	*0.22*	192	*0.24*	97	*0.55*	353	*0.31*	348	*0.34*	163	*0.72*	432	*0.39*	575	*0.44*	265
Generative "	*0.08*	54	*0.08*	71	*0.06*	22	*0.08*	51	*0.07*	73	*0.08*	36	*0.11*	68	*0.05*	67	*0.05*	32
	10.92		**8.70**		**8.57**		**10.74**		**8.80**		**8.76**		**11.77**		**8.87**		**8.59**	
Cancer	*0.52*	340	*0.31*	270	*0.34*	133	*0.54*	345	*0.45*	498	*0.36*	173	*0.56*	334	*0.47*	688	*0.46*	281
Childbirth	*0.15*	100	*0.10*	88	*0.13*	50	*0.13*	85	*0.13*	142	*0.17*	83	*0.1*	58	*0.09*	133	*0.08*	47
Suicide	*0.00*	0	*0.00*	0	*0.00*	0	*0.08*	49	*0.05*	53	*0.07*	31	*0.11*	68	*0.05*	78	*0.06*	35
Violence	*1.44*	948	*0.40*	344	*0.62*	248	*1.45*	934	*0.33*	366	*0.63*	299	*1.51*	909	*0.35*	514	*0.62*	374
Other causes	*5.24*	3450	*3.29*	2844	*3.34*	1327	*4.51*	2902	*3.93*	4381	*3.61*	1719	*4.96*	2984	*4.17*	6156	*4.27*	2601
	7.34		**4.11**		**4.43**		**6.71**		**4.88**		**4.85**		**7.24**		**5.13**		**5.49**	
total mortality rate:	***28.23***		***21.00***		***19.84***		***26.91***		***21.45***		***19.94***		***25.51***		***19.97***		***19.75***	

Source: Supplement to the Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England (London, 1864) pp.236-237; *Supplement to the Thirty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England* (London, 1875) pp.240-243; *Supplement to the Forty-Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England* (London, 1885) pp.210-211.

decade 1871-80 witnessed the biggest drop, with significant reductions in mortality from airborne infection and from typhus, and in Bristol itself the falling totals of measles, scarlet fever, whooping trend just noted. [108] The cough and phthisis (tuberculosis) are all notable at a time of population outflow. Again this coincides with local government activity, with Dr David Davies appointed as the city's first Medical Officer of Health in 1865. Davies was strongly influenced by another Bristol doctor, William Budd (surgeon at the Infirmary 1847-1862), who is credited along with John Snow with the discovery of the mode of transmission of cholera, and was a leading proponent of preventive disinfection. A proactive approach was adopted, with sanitary inspectors isolating typhus cases and disinfecting their dwellings with chloride of lime, and also pressurising the Sanitary Committee into a more authoritarian stance against landlords who failed to provide adequate privies with main sewer outflows. [109] The role of philanthropy in all this is not obvious. Even the fight against smallpox, acknowledged as one area in which treatment was potentially effective, cannot be regarded as a great success - there were 550 smallpox deaths in the city and suburbs in 1851-60, and 483 in 1871-80. [110]

Yet none of this conclusively shows that Bristol would not have been *worse* off without its medical charities, and the unresolved state of the 'gateways to death' controversy precludes a firm judgement. Certainly, the pre-Listerian hospital in Bristol provides a good deal of anecdotal evidence for a critical verdict: for example, the vulnerability of staff and inmates to 'hospital fever' (typhus) and erysipelas, the surgeon, clad in germ-ridden gown, smoking a cigar above the operating table, the out-patients treated to long waits and abrupt manners, and the enthusiasm of some practitioners for bleeding and cupping, which persisted well into the nineteenth century. [111] On the other hand it could be argued that the expansion of the voluntary hospitals indicated a real demand for their services, that hospital death rates were not excessive, that the degree of insanitary

108 David Large and Frances Round op. cit., pp.5-7; Latimer *Annals...Nineteenth Century* op. cit., pp.315-6; this programme followed the establishment in 1851 of the Sanitary Committee of the Corporation in the wake of the 1849 cholera epidemic.

109 David Large and Frances Round op.cit., pp.16-20; for Budd see also G.Munro Smith op. cit., p.354; Bill Luckin 'Evaluating the sanitary revolution: typhus and typhoid in London, 1851-1900' in Robert Woods and John Woodward ed. op. cit., pp.113-116, suggests that lower migration from Ireland restraining the progress of the parasite carrying the typhus, and this may have been a factor.

110 Thomas McKeown op. cit., p.99, but see also his reservations, pp.11-13.

111 G.Munro Smith op. cit., pp.54-5, 125, 160, 198-9, 303, 305, 341.

conditions have been exaggerated, and that aggregate mortality rates cannot be used to evaluate hospital efficacy, since most did not admit infectious cases, while those that did probably benefitted the community they served by isolating the contagion. [112] If we look beyond the outcome of treatment and therapy, then a more positive social contribution can be ascribed to Bristol's hospitals. Their value was recuperative rather than curative, offering the adult sick poor a space where they would receive care, a bed, regular food and a protected environment for the duration of their illness. [113] They also offered training, which was to bear fruit in scientific advances in the twentieth century, their medical men played a part in public health initiatives, and the public profile of their doctors helped erode the cultural barriers of distrust of official interventionism by local M.O.H.'s. [114]

Conclusion

Evaluation of the efficacy of philanthropy is one of the most difficult aspects of the theme, hampered as it is by lack of appropriate sources, or, in the case of voluntary hospitals, lack of scholarly work on their 'scandalously neglected archives'. [115] While the evidence presented here cannot support a pessimistic appraisal of the achievement of the 'voluntary impulse' it has drawn attention to the limitations of that achievement. Charity schools and hospitals cannot be assigned the leading role in improving the health and education of the population at large. Instead they emerge as only one of a host of convergent factors, which include regional economic variation, demographic fluctuation, the standard of living and the intervention of local or national government. Voluntary workers at the sharp end of poor relief were well aware of their relative impotence. As

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112 S.Cherry 'The Hospitals and Population Growth: the Voluntary General Hospitals, Mortality and Local Populations in the English Provinces in the Eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', part I, *Population Studies*, 34, (1980) pp.59-75, part II, 35, (1980) pp.251-265; John Woodward *To do the sick no harm. A study of the British voluntary hospital system to 1875* (London, 1974), chs. 10, 11; Guenter B.Risse *Hospital life in Enlightenment Scotland. Care and Teaching at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh* (Cambridge, 1986) Epilogue; see also the recent thesis by Bernice Boss 'The Bristol Infirmary 1761-2 and the 'Laborious-Industrious Poor" unpublished Ph.D thesis University of Bristol (1995) which arrived too late for full consideration here, but which concludes that 'The Infirmary's treatment of patients ... over a range of distempers was almost certainly therapeutically effective' see Abstract; conversely, Amanda Berry's research into Bristol Infirmary patients' registers has revealed spates of death by fever which do strongly suggest cross-infection within the hospital (personal communication).

113 This is an important theme of Mary Fissell's 'The "Sick and Drooping Poor" in Eighteenth Century Bristol and its Region', *The Social History of Medicine* 2, 1, (1989) pp.35-58.

114 John Woodward 'Medicine and the city: the nineteenth century experience' in Robert Woods and John Woodward ed. op. cit. esp. p.77; Anne Hardy op. cit., Conclusion.

115 Roy Porter and Andrew Wear 'Introduction', idem. ed. *Problems and Methods in the History of Medicine* (London, 1987).op. cit., p.3; Guenter Risse's 'Hospital History: New Sources and Methods' in the same volume provides a programme for such research, and his own study of the Edinburgh Infirmary demonstrates the possibilities of reaching a more optimistic conclusion based on firm evidence; the recent theses of Boss and Berry (see bibliography) on Bristol, Keir Waddington on the London hospitals, and Bronwen Croxon on dispensaries have begun to address this neglect.

the Unitarian domestic missionary observed in 1841: 'Until (employment) is secured, and that too in a way which does not imply social degradation, every other means will be proportionately ineffectual'. [116]

116 BRL B70605 *2nd. Annual Report of Lewins Mead Meeting Domestic Mission Society* (1841) p.5.

Chapter 10

Voluntary Charity: Philanthropy and Society

This chapter will return to the debates mentioned in the Introduction concerning the relationship between philanthropy and its social context. At the core are questions of motivation and outcome. Can class formation and the forging of a unitary class consciousness stand as explanations of the growth of voluntary charity ? Was there a significant working class presence, and if so, is this evidence that philanthropy was a force for consensus and social harmony ? Was there a significant female presence, and if so, was philanthropy a force of change in gender relations ? Can a notion of homogeneous class purpose be reconciled with the picture of political and religious division within the middle class, that was so strong a theme in Section I ? If not, is philanthropy best understood not just as a power relationship between rich and poor, but also as a vehicle for the expression of conflicting identities and aspirations ? Indeed, it is the interrelationship between philanthropy and various ideologies, of party, religion, nation, and gender, that I shall explore.

a) The social origin of Bristol philanthropists

Before discussing the possible meanings participants attached to voluntarism we need to form a clearer picture of who they were. *Table 10.1* (over) shows the occupations of secretaries and treasurers for 1841 and 1883, the latter year being chosen to test the possibility that a working class presence increased later in the century, and secondly because the source, the 1884 *Condition of the Bristol Poor* report, provides an alternative to reliance on trade directory entries. Names of officers were extracted then linked with occupations listed in the 1841 and 1883 directories. 'Gentleman' was assumed where an address in one of the wealthy suburbs was given, but no occupation, and this probably overlaps in reality with 'Trade'. [1] This latter category could embrace a range of social

[1] See R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party: The making of the British middle class, Leeds 1820-1850* (Manchester, 1990), p.23; idem., 'The Middle Class and the Property Cycle', T.C.Smout ed. *The Search for Wealth and Stability* (London, 1979); it may be that high status individuals, perhaps with mixed interests, did not wish to be listed in the directory under a particular occupation, or it may be that they had effectively retired from active participation in business to live off assets: W.D.Wills would exemplify the former and J.Eaton the latter; wealthy suburbs: Clifton, Cotham, Redland, Kingsdown, Brislington.

gradations: in 1841 it contained one of Bristol's wealthiest businessman, George Thomas, the wholesale grocer, and others for whom size of business, wealth and status cannot be easily discerned from the entry. [2] There is a fairly large 'Not found' group in both years, arising from non-appearance in the directory, or the impossibility of isolating a person with a common name, or the difficulty of identifying women from the predominantly male listings. [3] The presence of this category should not be taken as indicating a potential working class presence; in 1883, of the nineteen not found, the addresses of nine were given in the *Report*, eight of which (seven women, one man) were in the wealthy suburbs.

Table 10.1 Occupations of officers of Bristol voluntary charities, 1841, 1883.

	1841	*1883*
	%	*%*
Professions	18.2	20.4
Church	27.3	16.7
Gentleman/Lady	18.8	25
Trade	13	10.2
Servicemen	4.5	4.6
Charity workers	3.2	5.6
Not found	14.9	17.6

Source: *Matthews's Trade Directory* 1841, *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor* (Bristol, 1884)

One striking result is the role of professionals, who furnished about one-fifth of the activists in both surveys. [4] This suggests that the comparative security of income and social status enjoyed by successful members of this group brought the leisure and the disposition for voluntarism, while the skills associated with their work made them likely choices for leadership roles. The Church also provided a substantial number of officers, with Anglicans the more active: 23 in 1841 (including wives and parish clerks) against 13 non-conformists, and in 1883, nine Anglicans against two non-

2 There were three charity officers in 1841 who may have been artisans: A.Barber, watch and clock maker, Mr Bragg, boot and shoe maker, and George Cole, bookbinder.

3 Women have been counted under husband's or fathers' occupations.

4 The total numbers of professionals found were 27 in 1841 (banking (6), accountancy (4), medicine(8) and the law (6)) and 22 in 1883 including 7 solicitors and 1 barrister ; for professions and municipal goverment, E.P.Hennock *Fit and Proper Persons Ideal and Reality in Nineteenth Century Urban Government* (London, 1973), pp.28, 202-4, 324-6.

conformists. [5] High ranking servicemen, probably retired, appear in both surveys as do gentlemen and ladies. Possibilities for a working class role are limited to a few of the 'Not found', some of the tradesmen, and the charity workers themselves. In 1883, out of 11 in trade, there were three who were potentially from the lower end of the indistinct region between middle and working class status. [6] In the category of charity workers, it is possible to identify in 1841 two people who gave their occupation as 'collector', and three in the book trade who serviced the demand for Bibles and tracts, while in 1883 three missionaries and two home superintendents were found. No further clues indicate their social status.*Table 10.2* (over) offers a second example, the occupations of the Infirmary's House Committee 1812-70; this body was elected by subscribers to oversee management, and therefore represents 'activist' medical philanthropists. The emergence of the new professions that began to appear in subscription lists in the late eighteenth century is well to the fore here, with the law furnishing consistently large numbers of members. [7] Equally important were those with no occupation listed, represented here as 'Gentleman'. Contrary to the claim of Mary Fissell, who detected a nineteenth century 'abdication of the governors' from Infirmary administration, in favour of medical professionals and new men, Bristol's old elite remained well- represented. [8] The numbers of merchants did not diminish until the mid-century, nor did they all represent new trades: in 1841 four out of the seven were wine merchants, one of the port's oldest commodities. A sense of commitment to the charity is also evidenced by the reappearance of individuals and families over time. [9] Long-term devotion by elite families was also present amongst permanent office-holders:

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5 The totals were 1841: 42, incl. four affiliation unknown, and 1883 18, seven unknown; the listing in the 1884 *Report* did not include foreign missions, hence the declining proportion between the two dates.

6 *Condition* pp. 210, 213, 230; A.Krauss, builder and contractor, was Treasurer of the Bristol Musical Association; Caleb Trapnell, a cabinet maker, was secretary to the Bristol Benevolent Association; L.S.Allen a painter, was Secretary to the Friend in Need Society, associated with the Independent congregation worshipping at the Tabernacle.

7 For an occupational breakdown of subscribers for six years between 1736 and 1806, see Mary E.Fissell 'The Physic of Charity 'The Physic of Charity: Health and Welfare in the West Country, 1690-1834' unpublished Ph.D, University of Pennsylvania (1988), p.96.

8 Mary E.Fissell, *Patients, Power and the Poor in Eighteenth Century Bristol* (Cambridge 1991), ch.6.

9 A third of the Committee stood down or were re-elected each year; F.C.Husenbeth was on those of 1812, 1820 and 1830, Reverend Thomas Hope was on those of 1847 and 1870, town clerk Daniel Burges was a member in 1820, and his son, Daniel junior, appears 1841 and 1847: four generations of Daniel Burges' held civic office, starting with Daniel Burges who was Clerk of Arraigns 1788-91.

members of the Cave family held the post of Treasurer from 1829-44 and from 1880 into the new century, while two of the Harfords were in the office, 1844-59 and 1859-69. [10]

Table 10.2 Bristol Infirmary House Committee, occupations 1812-1870

	1812	*1820*	*1830*	*1841*	*1847*	*1870*
Gentleman	**7**	**5**	**2**	**5**	**7**	**4**
Services		**1**			**1**	**1**
Professions:						
Law	*7*	*4*	*4*	*3*	*3*	*3*
Insurance	*1*	*1*	*1*	*1*		
Medicine	*2*	*2*	*4*	*4*	*1*	*2*
Finance			*1*	*1*		
Agent			*3*			
Architect				*1*		
	10	**7**	**13**	**10**	**4**	**5**
Trade:						
Merchant	*4*	*9*	*7*	*3*	*1*	
Wholesale	*2*	*1*	*1*	*1*		
Retail					*1*	
Manufacture	*2*	*2*	*1*	*1*		
Artisan			*1*	*1*	*1*	
Books/print	*1*		*2*			
	9	**12**	**12**	**6**	**3**	
Church:						
Anglican			*1*	*2*	*1*	*1*
Dissent	*2*					
Other*				*1*	*1*	*2*
	2		**1**	**3**	**2**	**3**
Not found	**4**	**5**	**0**	**4**	**4**	**7**

* = affiliation not known, + one charity collector.

Source: BRO 35893/21/c), d), e) *The State of the Bristol Infirmary*; Bristol Trade Directories, 1812, 1820, 1830, 1841, 1847, 1870

Bristol charity in the eighteenth century was largely a male preserve, with endowments in the hands of male vestrymen and Corporation members, and the Infirmary, the Colston and county societies led by men. Women nonetheless remained significant as donors: Mary Peloquin's gift of

[10] The Caves were an established banking dynasty who had been prominent in civic office since the late eighteenth century, see A.B.Beaven *Bristol Lists Municipal and Miscellaneous* (Bristol, 1899), pp.330, and C.H.Cave *A History of Banking in Bristol* (Bristol, 1899); Fissell herself points to the Harfords as an example of one of the old city dynasties whose interest characterised both Corporation of the Poor and Infirmary management in its early days, Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., pp.89, 111.

£19,000 in 1778 was one of the city's largest funds, and by putting its disposal in the hands of the wife of the mayor it dignified prominent women with a civic function of some weight. [11] The new century saw a much more public role for female philanthropy, with several charities run by women formed, including three Dorcas Societies, the Female Misericordia, the Bristol Lying-In Institution, the Guardian House and the Lewins Mead Working and Visiting Society. They focused on what might be described as female interests, such as the support of women in childbirth and new mothers and the rescue of prostitutes, while in some societies charitable contact followed regular sewing and dress-making sessions by members. In a few female control was complete, while in others male officers were used. [12] Amongst the associations and institutions which employed women's committees or visitors were the Penitentiary, the Diocesan School Society, the National Benevolent Institution, the Friendly Female Clothing Society, the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society, the Clifton Parochial Provident Society, the Diocesan District Visiting Society, and the General Hospital. Here it seems that women's involvement was not instrumental and creative, but instead a necessary part of structures conceived and managed by men. [13] For instance, a gender division of labour applied in educational charity, with girls' schools seen as the province of female philanthropists. [14]

If women's philanthropy was fundamentally subordinate it was by no means insignificant, as the history of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society illustrates. Founded in 1810, the leadership of the Society was entirely male. Women figured quite strongly in the membership list, providing 124 out of the 407 subscribers in the 1823 annual statement, contributing £155 out of a total subscription

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11 Manchee I pp.397-481 for parochial endowments made to St. James during the eighteenth century, of which 27 came from men and 17 from women.; for Peloquin, John Latimer *Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* p.435; Manchee I 106-8; again I differ with Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., p.92, who characterises the bequest as typical of the 'increasingly old-fashioned, female variety', without noting its innovative civic feature, or observing that the wife of the mayor or leading alderman had the power to vet applicants much as the lady visitors did in the newer charities, pp.123-5; Jonathan Barry has dated the shift within the Colston and county societies to support for lying-in women to the 1760s, 'Bristol Charities in the 18th Century', Bristol Record Society lecture, 27/2/1993.

12 BRO 35893 (36) n Richard Smith's Memoirs vol xiv, for Bristol Lying-In Institution had a Patroness, the Duchess Dowager of Beaufort, and a Ladies Committee: the 1821 subscription list was made up of 66 women and three men, though the physician, surgeon/accoucheur, secretary and treasurer were all male; BRL B7055, B7057, *2nd and 4th Reports of the Lewins Mead Chapel Working and Visiting Society*, for an all-woman committee, a female treasurer and a subscription list of one man and 42 women in 1836; BRO 39399/CD/S/3 (d) Bristol Dorcas Society Annual Reports; this was run by a ladies committee with woman treasurer and secretary, and in *1845* had *115* female subscribers and 20 men, though male trustees were appointed to perform the annual audit and invest legacies.

13 This is the line taken by Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall *Family Fortunes. Men and women of the English middle class, 1780-1850* (London, 1987), pp.421-3, 432.

14 Though this was by no means always the case: the Temple Blue Girls School had an all male committee of guardians throughout the period of its surviving minute book, 1816-49, BRO P/Tem/Kb/1.

income of £540. [15] A further £206 was contributed by the collectors of the Bristol ladies' branch, and their sales of Bibles yielded £203. [16] Though initially uncertain about the propriety of women's engagement in this type of work the Committee frankly admitted that if 'the ladies of Bristol were to withdraw themselves from the work, the supply of Scriptures to the poor would be tardy and partial'. [17] A Ladies Branch was founded in 1817, with a female treasurer, secretary and committee were all women, and this was later reconstituted into six ladies' associations, which by 1828 were reported to have made 11,000 home visits in the course of the year. [18] So, while initially precluded from foundation, management and financial control, women activists quickly seized on the Society as an outlet for public work and made themselves indispensable. This in turn brought a gradual increase in power.

There is no real evidence that working people were the driving force behind the management of voluntary charities. Ideas and organisation emanated from the city's elite families and from the churches, much as one might have expected given the earlier discussion of the times and places of meetings. [19] However, there is some evidence of working class involvement in staffing and subscription. Charities offered a number of job opportunities, in 1841 for instance there were 46 masters, mistresses and governesses teaching in the charity schools, and five matrons/superintendents running asylums and hospitals. [20] These numbers had risen to 60 and 14 respectively by 1862, though this is likely to under-represent the real figure given the unsystematic approach to trade directory listing. The 1851 census of occupations did not differentiate charity school teachers from the rest, though it did distinguish 17 men and 16 women as 'Officer of a Charitable Institution'. [21] There were also 197 nurses listed and 14 midwives, but again the

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15 Calculated from BRO 9354, *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society* (1824); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., p.432 point out that subscription figures alone underplay women's financial contribution, as many male gifts effectively represent households, in which the female economic role was present if unacknowledged..

16 BRO 9354, the total income for 1823 was £2689, so the women's direct financial input was around 21% of the whole.

17 Propriety: F.K.Prochaska *Women and Philanthropy in 19th. Century England* (Oxford, 1980) pp.25-6; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit.,p.429-30.BRO 9351 *Eighth Report of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society* (1817).

18 BRO 9354, *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society* (1824); BRO 9356, *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society* (1828); this was an extraordinary number of visits, given that the 1821 census reported 15,436 inhabited houses in Bristol, Barton Regis and Hartcliffe/Bedminster.

19 See above, Chapter 9, a).

20 *Trade Directory* 1841; the term mistress appears to have superseded that of governess between the two years surveyed: I am uncertain whether any difference of function was implied.

21 The difference between the directory and the census numbers is probably explained by the counting of endowed almshouse superintendents in the latter.

proportion identified with charity is uncertain. The social status of all these workers is by no means clear, and the Bristol sources offer little new evidence

In the entirely voluntary field were large numbers of Sunday School teachers and lay visitors. By the 1810s there were 29 superintendents and 332 teachers working in the 17 Methodist Sunday Schools alone, while in 1835 the Friends First Day School had 18 volunteer teachers. [22] Historians of the Sunday School are divided on the social origins of the teachers: were they mostly working class ex-pupils, or were the majority from a superior stratum, at least before the 1830s ? [23] The 1884 *Report* asserted that the teachers varied '..in station, from poor and simple to rich and cultured', and also alluded to Bible classes 'conducted by working men', one of which attracted 400 people. [24] It also asserted that working class home visiting was not extensive. Poorer districts had the fewest volunteers from within the locality, and it was in them that middle class agencies such as 'congregations' from 'Clifton, Redland and Cotham', 'Clifton College' and '"ladies from Clifton"' were most active. [25] Where the help of the 'artizan class' was acknowledged the Committee members were lukewarm as to its efficacy. The problem was that '...the gulf between this class is deeper than that between the rich and poor', owing to the '..rougher kindness of the manners of the artizan class'. In contrast the 'tact' and 'adaption' of the 'richer classes' proved to be 'more efficient and influential'. [26] This was hardly a ringing endorsement of 'charitable co-operation'. [27]

How significant were working class subscriptions ? [28] Bristol Infirmary accounts offer some support for the contention that 'humble subscribers' played a significant part in hospital funding, but this must be carefully qualified. [29] Working class subscription began on a small scale from the 1840s This was so remarkable that the 1846 Annual Report drew special attention to it, and from

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22 J.S.Broad *A History of the Origins and Progress of Sunday Schools in Bristol* (Bristol, 1816) pp.151-4; BRO SF/FD/AR/1a) though this figure had fallen to 11 by 1842.

23 Thomas Walter Laqueur *Religion and Respectability. Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780-1850* (London, 1976) pp.91-3; Malcolm Dick 'The Myth of the Working-class Sunday School' *History of Education*, 1980, 9, 1 pp.31-4. Dick's article also savagely criticizes Laqueur's argument that many schools were founded by working people, and shows that Laqueur misattributed foundation in some cases, including William Smith of Bristol pp.30, 40.

24 *Condition* op. cit., pp.118, 121; one Sunday School drew its Superintendent and teachers from the first class of the Grammar School.

25 Ibid., pp.116-7.

26 Ibid., pp. 118-9.

27 F.K.Prochaska 'Philanthropy' in F.M.L.Thompson ed. *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950 Volume 3 Social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990), pp.366, 370-1.

28 For anecdotal evidence of a collection where the poor 'cheerfully contributed their mite', FFBJ 30/7/1814.

29 F.K.Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., p.364, citing Brian Abel-Smith *The Hospitals, 1800-1948* (1964) p.250.

the 1850s the 'Workmen's contribution' was listed separately. [30] It rose from 3% of all subscriptions, and a mere 0.1% of total income in 1847 to 28% of total subscriptions and 7% of total income by 1884. [31] Contributions were made by workplace or occupational groups, and while sometimes presented as offerings made in gratitude for treatment, their organisation around individual firms or trade unions suggests they should be understood as communally funded employee health insurance. [32] Working class subscriptions to the Infirmary took the form not of individual gifts, but of joint contributions; only in this way could they be afforded. As suggested by Section II, the priority for the disposal of surplus household income was investment with one of the savings institutions, or friendly societies.

From the timing and nature of these subscriptions it seems that the working class financial contribution to philanthropy only gathered pace after the mid-century, when real wages began to rise. Before that time, the gap between surplus from the weekly wage and the usual amount given to charity must surely have been too great to permit individual subscription. In 1854 wage levels had reached 11s-15s per week for the unskilled or semi-skilled labourer, and 15s-30s for the skilled operative. [33] Examples of minimum subscriptions in the mid-century were two guineas for the Infirmary and one guinea for the General Hospital, Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society (1823), Stranger's Friend Society (1826), Asylum for Poor Orphan Girls (1821), and Samaritan Society. [34] Not all charities were so exclusive, but even in those that solicited small donations the impact of the poor was not great. For example, out of 120 annual subscribers to Congregationalist Bristol City Mission in 1841, 28 gave less than 10s. In sum this accounted for £8-7s, out of a total of £104-10s. [35] The Mission was also supported by collections by the ladies' associations of each

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[30] BRO 35893/21/e *The State of the Bristol Infirmary*, 1846, 1847, 1852; no doubt emphasis on 'this laudable example' set by the 'industrious working classes' was intended to embarrass '..those who have been blessed with the abundance of this world's goods' into greater generosity.

[31] Ibid., passim.:1850s: average 13% of total subscriptions, 3% of total income; 1860s, 20% and 6% respectively.

[32] Ibid., 1846, 1884; in 1884 these ranged from minor sums, like the £1-1s-5d from Mangotsfield Pennant Stone Co., to the medium range, such as £20 from C Division City Police, to big subscriptions such as Bristol Wagon Works Co.'s £87-13s-6d; *Bristol Mercury* 11/1/1868, for cork manufacturers J. and J. Powell keeping their Infirmary Box in their counting house, raising the possibility that the habit was encouraged by employers; ibid., 18/1/1868 for subscriptions from trade unions, with the Shipwrights' Society giving £7, and the Masons, Curriers and Journeymen Tailors clubs, two guineas each..

[33] *Bristol Mercury* 25/2/1854.

[34] BRL 9354 *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society* (1823); BRL B4048 Report of the Stranger's Friend Society (1826), BRL B9780 *State of the Orphan Asylum for the Year* 1821 (1821), BRL 4644 *Report of the Samaritan Society for the year* 1840 (1840),

[35] BRL B16885 *15th Annual Report of the Bristol City Mission*; the numbers were: 5s - 27, 2s6d. - 7, 4s - 3, 3s3d. - 1.

chapel, and these offered more of an opportunity for those on a low income to give 5s or less. Even here though small gifts do not automatically signify working class status: of the 469 donors in 1841 who gave 5s or less, 61% gave between 3s and 5s, and indeed the largest number (153) gave 5s. [36] Also, the proportions of very small donors who gave under 3s are concentrated in Zion, Hope and Broadmead chapels, suggesting that the energy of individual collectors was the key factor, rather than popular local approval for the cause.

The Bristol evidence therefore shows that the management and funding of voluntary charity was controlled by middle class males. Visiting and fund-raising increasingly fell to women, who fastened onto philanthropy as a field of social action, but only a small minority of charities had female committees, and most of these also had male officers, or were supported by a congregation. The working class contribution is hard to document, but does not appear to have been particularly significant.

b) Class ideals and charity.

The dominance of the middle class over the voluntary sector, and the efflorescence of activity in the early nineteenth century have led some to characterize charitable effort as a manifestation of class formation, producing a new, coherent class identity. [37] For example, in her study of the Bristol Infirmary Mary Fissell described the replacement in the early nineteenth century of the old-style 'face to face' charity of patronage networks, by a depersonalised, interrogative philanthropy, a trend she explained by the 'birth of class'. [38] As shown in Chapter 8, there is no doubt that the era of the French Wars did usher in a new phase in the history of philanthropy, and that several of the charities formed in this period attracted members of all sections of the elite. However it is by no means clear that these changes were representative of a 'new' middle class with a unitary worldview, nor that styles of charity changed from the paternalistic to the impersonal.

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[36] Ibid., the chapels were: Lodge St., King St., Brunswick, Bridge St., Counterslip, Zion, Thrissell St., Hope and Broadmead.

[37] R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit., chs. 1, 7, 10, 11, 13; idem., 'Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites' op. cit., and see above, Introduction pp.5-6.

[38] Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., esp. ch.6, p.228, where E.P.Thompson is cited as the authority on class formation, though the allusion to Harold Perkin's work in the title of the chapter 'The abdication of the governors' is not made clear.

Continuities in relationships between rich and poor point to the difficulty of identifying a new emphasis on the 'moral value' of social discipline or work. Such had been the mercantilist philosophy propounded by John Cary when he established Bristol's Corporation of the Poor in 1696; the aim was to provide inmates with spinning and carding, to wean them from idleness and begging by inculcating a work ethic. [39] Similarly, while Malthusian thought had some purchase amongst articulate Liberals in the 1830s and 1840s, it never became a dominant influence, but co-existed throughout the period with an entirely non-discriminatory, open-handed approach to street-begging. This is amply demonstrated through the scare stories about imposture, that can be traced back to the eighteenth century as well as on to the late nineteenth. [40] Nor would the efforts to introduce a ticketing system, made by the PMFS in the 1810s or the Clifton Mendicity Society in the 1840s, have got underway if casual giving was not seen to be extensive. As late as 1884 the Bishop's Committee was castigating such promiscuous benevolence as '...the *certain source* of the evil conditions it assumes to remedy', having estimated the sums informally distributed at £50,000 a year. [41] This is suggestive of the persistence of spontaneous Christian alms-giving, devoid of judgements as to the character of the needy or responsibility for destitution.

The recognition that external factors such as seasonal change and unemployment were to blame for poverty was also a recurrent theme, acting '...to check the sweeping condemnation of the poor in which some are apt to indulge, who suppose that poverty is entirely the fault of the sufferer'. [42] Coal committees and appeals from vicars on behalf of parishioners regularly appeared in the newspapers

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39 Paul Slack *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1988) p.196; Michel Foucault *Madness and Civilization* (1961) edn. London 1993 pp.51-2; David Harris Sacks *The Widening Gate. Bristol and the Atlantic Economy, 1450-1700* (London, 1991) p.340; for Cary's ideas in the context of the broader reform movement, see Mary E. Fissell 'Charity Universal? Institutions and Moral Reform in Eighteenth Century Bristol', Lee Davison, Tim Hitchcock, Tim Keirn, Robert B.Shoemaker *Stilling the Grumbling Hive: The Response to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1689-1750* (Stroud, 1992) esp. pp.124-5; also Jonathan Barry 'Introduction' in Jonathan Barry and Kenneth Morgan ed. *Reformation and Revival in Eighteenth Century Bristol* (Bristol, 1994) esp. pp.9-10; for workhouse labour, E.E.Butcher *Bristol Corporation of the Poor 1696-1898* (Bristol, 1972) pp.5-7; *Reports from the Committees of the House of Commons vol. x Provisions; Poor; 1774-1802*: 1787 *Further Appendix to the Report from the Committee on Certain Returns relative to the State of the Poor, and to Charitable Donations, & c.*, p.599, which reveals that in the 1770s paupers laboured at spinning, knitting and oakum picking; PP 1834 xxviii *Appendix to the First Report from the Commissioners on the Poor Laws* p.512a mentions lace-making workshops and stone-breaking at Hotwells managed by outside contractors, while knitting and oakum picking went on inside the house.

40 Mary Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., p.76.

41 *Report* op. cit., pp.179-180; no explanation of this huge conjectured figure was advanced, though the tendency of beggars to attract more donors in 'a comparatively poor district' was mentioned.

42 BRL B7060 *Lewins Mead Domestic Mission Society 2nd. Annual Report* (1841) p.3.

in cold winters. [43] Unitarian missionary reports regularly spelt out the way in which: 'Periodical loss of employment, and illness in the family of the industrious artizan, frequently operate to produce degradation and misery.' [44] The intractability of the poverty cycle was also articulated by these close observers:

> 'The next generation bring up their children, as they themselves were brought up, and afterwards pass away to a pauper's grave....each generation is a link of vagabondism and pauperism, ... and CHAINS are made that entrammel and retard the commonwealth'. [45]

It would therefore be hazardous to ascribe a unitary strategy to poverty to the nineteenth century Bristol middle class. Some attitudes were formed at the political level, others were shaped by religious outlook, others by functional imperatives. [46]

Similarly, the disappearance of paternalism cannot be documented convincingly. Unlike classic industrial revolution towns such as Preston there was no striking transfer of power from old elite to new cotton masters, synonomous with the middle class; Bristol's ruling oligarchy stayed in place and adapted. [47] As shown above Mary Fissell's view that the old elite withdrew from patronage of the Infirmary is hard to sustain. Equally questionable is her evidence that subscriber paternalism was in retreat before the 'transformation' of the hospital from charity to 'medical workplace', and it is worth making a brief diversion to show why. [48]

Fissell argues for the retreat of the old elite, due to suburbanisation and the counter attraction of new charities, and the disappearance of old style paternalism, founded on bonds of parish, neighbourhood and workplace, in favour of class-based interaction based on an evaluation of the

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43 *FFBJ* 26/1/1811, 5/12/1846.

44 BRL B7060 *Lewins Mead Domestic Mission Society 2nd. Annual Report* (1841) p.3.

45 BRL B7066 *Lewins Mead Domestic Mission Society.12th Annual Report* (1855).

46 See *Condition* op. cit., p.23 for a later statement of the influence of structural factors: 'if they are living in localities ... injurious to health, or if their opportunities for labour be few and irregular, the conditions of life of the poor must always be miserable'.

47 Meg Whittle 'Philanthropy in Preston: The Changing Face of Charity in a 19th. century Provincial Town' unpublished Ph.D. thesis University of Lancaster, (1990), p.i. argues for a 'demise of old obligations' consequent upon 'fundamental changes in social relationships': traditional responsibilities of 'noblesse oblige' within a society conceived of as an organic whole gave way before a new individualism which regarded poverty as the result of personal failings, see pp.13-14, 33, 34, 89, 95, 105, 113, 118, 384-6; Whittle never systematically demonstrates the change of personnel, however; for changes in Preston's elite as shown in civic ritual, Patrick Joyce *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the question of class 1848-1914* (Cambridge, 1991), pp.183-4.

48 Mary Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., p.147, see also pp.110, 126; her findings are intended to have 'general relevance', p.12, and have been well-received, eg. Roy Porter *Disease, Medicine and Society in England, 1550-1860* (1987) edn. London, 1993 p.69.

recipient's worthiness. [49] Material evidence was the growth in the number of casualty patients (ie. those admitted not by subscriber recommendation but directly by physician or surgeon) from 15% in 1751 to 32% by 1826, and the decline in the mean number of patients recommended by each subscriber, from 3.8 in 1750 to .33 in 1806. All this was underpinned by the need for surgeons to enhance their reputations and attract paying pupils by selecting the more scientifically interesting cases. [50] Thus medical charity became '..a class-specific demonstration of respectability...rather than the gentler expression of social hierarchy it had been'. [51]

Fissell's neglect of the hospital's financial records, and her failure to set her argument in the longer term context cast doubt on her conclusions. A supposed decline in the charitable nature of the Infirmary actually coincided with the huge jump in the number of subscribers in the 1790s, a direct response to the building appeal and the debt crisis which attended expansion at a time when the city's economy was in slump. [52] The purported fall in subscriber influence on admissions is much less striking over the long run, as samples from three random years will demonstrate. Taking In-Patients first, the ratios of charity patients to medical/staff admissions were: 1814, 65:35; 1836, 58:42; 1854, 74:26. [53] Far from declining patronage remained central to in-patient admission. The fluctuating numbers admitted by doctors were not contingent upon the growing ascendancy of medical men over the charity, but on funding considerations. As the capital assets of the Infirmary grew through building, and the accumulation of legacies and investment income, so it could accomodate a much greater number of patients than subscribers could recommend. [54] Out-patient

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[49] Ibid., p.126.

[50] Ibid., p.117, ch.7.

[51] Ibid., p.125; the evidence Fissell provides for the 'personal', 'long-standing' ties between subscribers and patients in Bristol is: a) statistics showing that between 1750 and 1775 the majority of patients came from the same parish as their recommender (a proportion that *grew* rather than diminished between the two years). b) four anecdotal accounts of governors' interventions, only two of which clearly show ongoing patronage, both based on work. c) a collection of recommendation notes, signed by local employers, publicans, landlords and surgeons, and presented by applicants to the St.James vestry in 1814 to entitle them to additional relief from the Corporation of the Poor in the bad winter. These seem more likely to have been an administrative shortcut devised by the authorities to provide some guarantee that claimants were genuinely in need and that they had a settlement; the relationship between signatories and the poor can only be guessed at, and anyway it is not at all clear that this system of personal reference differed from others which persisted through the nineteenth century, such as almshouse admission, or 'characters' presented in the law courts; see ibid., pp.113-5; P/St.J/Ch/8.

[52] The years 1796 (705 subscribers) and 1797 (918) of particular importance.

[53] BRO: 1814: FCH/BRI/3(k) 6,7,8; 1836: FCH/BRI/3(o) 10,11,12; 1854: FCH/BRI/3(t) 4,5,6; non-casualty/emergency admissions by named members of staff have been counted as non-charity admissions; of the subscriber recommendations the vast majority were from private individuals, eg. 1814, Individual, 725; Clergy, 24; Parish, 2; Firms 51.

[54] See above, Chapter 9 b), esp. *Table 9.4*, and below, Appendix 7; it should also be noted that not all subscribers were active: in 1768/71 some 335 of Infirmary patrons made *no* use of their power to admit an in-patient, see Amanda Berry 'Policy, patrons

admissions can be viewed from the numbers recorded in annual reports, and if the mid-century is studied, percentages of patients admitted by note were: 1850, 45%; 1860, 45%; 1870, 38%. [55] Here too patronage was still of considerable importance, even though admissions by note did not keep pace with the growth of out-patient numbers in the 1860s. [56] Again, this was not a function of increased power on the part of doctors, but of the expansion of facilities in the 1860s: the employment of more dispensary staff, the reform and expansion of nurse training and the opening of new wards. [57] So, while doctors did play a substantial part in admissions, as may be expected given the increasing status of medicine, this did not yet signify the hospital's transition from charity to 'medical workplace'.

Paternalism can also be seen in the growing number of business subscribers making charity admissions: these rose from 6% in 1814, to 15% in 1836, to 22% by 1854, by which time firms like the Great Western Railway Co., the sugar manufacturer Finzel and Sons, and the Coalpit Heath Company regularly sponsored patients. As Fissell herself points out with reference to the eighteenth century, this can hardly be explained as accident insurance, since employees suffering from a workplace injury could be admitted as casualties, so it seems that contrary to her assertion, workplace paternalism as the basis of the charitable relationship grew rather than diminished. [58]

Indeed, a major theme in the earlier discussion of endowment was precisely this persistence of old style benevolence, with the ongoing friction between those who accepted that parish or corporate charity *was* a channel of patronage, and those who attacked this practice to explicate the Radical theme of 'Old Corruption'. Later in the century disgruntled Liberals, musing on their 1868 by-election loss to J.W.Miles, had suspected that it was the implicit capacity for patronage that he wielded as a prominent banker that had ensured his success: charity may have been absent, but the

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and patients: admissions to the Bristol Infirmary and the Devon and Exeter Hospital 1770-1820' unpublished paper presented at research colloquium 'Hospitals and Society in the South-West' University of Exeter, June 1995, Table 2.

55 BRO 35893/21/e); admissions by note 1850-70 were increasing for medical cases (4,862-5,416), and stable for surgery (1,955-1,805); the percentages of those made out-patients from in-patients was 8%, 10% and 2% in the sample years.

56 See Appendix 7, total out-patients: 1860, 13,099; 1865, 21,793; 1870, 18,816.

57 G.Munro Smith *A History of the Bristol Royal Infirmary* (Bristol, 1917) pp.333-9; the new wards were opened in 1868, so cannot satisfactorily account for the drop in those admitted from in-patients.

58 Mary Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., p.115; in addition to providing a link with past paternalism the growing incidence of business subscriptions is also indicative of the increasing significance of work-based welfare schemes, see J.Melling 'Welfare capitalism and the origins of the welfare states' *Social History*, 17, (1992) pp.453-78.

importance of the personal relationship in party politics lived on. [59] As late as 1884 Joseph Russell's bequest to St. Paul parish had specified that income from the endowment (in the form of a food dole) was only to go to those who voted 'constitutionally'. [60] In the same year the Bishop's *Report* asserted that 'rivalry of political spirit' still motivated distribution of Colston society gifts. [61]

Face to face distribution of alms co-existed with impersonal enquiry. At parish level, despite the efforts of the Charity Commission, vestrymen were still allowed a good deal of individual discretion in the distribution of Christmas doles. [62] Nor was the money dole in lieu of symptomatic relief given up: the Gloucestershire Society was taken to task by the *Bristol Mercury* in 1837 for promoting dependency and false expectations with its pecuniary gifts. [63] The whole purpose of district visiting was to reforge personal bonds of a community or congregational nature, and missionaries' reports make it quite clear that visits were repeated, sometimes over a period of years, to establish a genuine rapport. [64] Unitarian lady visitors targetted their Sunday School families and '..the Poor connected with the congregation', not just to distribute gifts but '..as friends desirous of manifesting sympathy'. [65] It was the suspicion that not all voluntary charities operated an impersonal assessment of the client's worth that brought the Charity Organisation Society into existence to introduce a more discriminatory approach, though interest was short-lived in Bristol. [66] If a rupture in the development of subscription charity has to be identified, then a better candidate is the period around 1870; as shown in Chapter 8, this was when the Muller homes drew on anonymous donations, Whitwill's Children's Hospital abandoned recommendation, and the state was commandeering education. [67] This timing is not to be explained by histories of class, but rather by

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59 *Bristol Mercury* 2/5/1868.
60 BRO P/St P/Ch/1.
61 *Condition* op. cit., p.178.
62 See P/St J/Ch/11/6, and discussion above, Chapter 5, b).
63 *Bristol Mercury* 16/9/1837.
64 See for instance BRL B16885 *15th Annual Report of the Bristol City Mission* (1842) pp.36-9; Fissell argues, on the basis of lying-in charity records that donor and recipient were 'alien ... to each other'..
65 BRL B7054, B7055, Ist and 2nd *Report of the Lewins Mead Chapel Working and Visiting Society* (1835, 1836).
66 *Condition* op. cit., p.213-4; the concurrent and divergent approaches of missionaries and 'charity organisers' in Manchester is the theme of Alan J.Kidd '"Outcast Manchester" Voluntary Charity, Poor Relief and the Casual Poor 1860-1905', A.J.Kidd and K.W.Roberts ed. *City, Class and Culture: Studies of cultural production and social policy in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester, 1985); see also *Condition* op. cit., p.187.
67 See above, Chapter 8, d).

the growing confidence of professionials and charity activists that provision could be delivered more effectively, quickly and universally by abandoning subscriber intervention.

If the variegated nature of voluntary charity, and its capacity to encompass different attitudes to need, make it an unsuitable vehicle for the depiction of middle class formation, a reservation must also be expressed about Prochaska's characterisation of philanthropy as the site of shared values. [68] There is no doubt that large numbers of the poor were reached by voluntary effort. For example, in the first few months of 1868, 350 'aged poor' had enjoyed a free roast dinner and 'address' from the vicar of St Phillips, there were 803 depositors to the Bristol Penny Bank, and the Bristol and Clifton Mendicity Society gave out 3,403 meals. [69] Temperance campaigns regularly drew impressive attendances for fetes, teas and processions. [70] The thousands who were schooled or medically treated by charity have also been mentioned. However, there are great dangers in going on to ascribe homogenous sets of values - respectability, religion, self-help, gratitude for the kindly gift - to these working class recipients of charity.

Firstly the relationship between an individual's participation in a charitable activity gives no certain indication of his or her private, and perhaps evolving, beliefs. Secondly the sources on which historians rely for their discovery of the 'respectable' working class tend to be those produced by middle class observers, whose understanding and motivation may be questionable. [71] Peter Bailey has urged that the application of a role analysis of working class behaviour can provide a greater sensitivity to the reality behind the appearance of compliance and respectability, and he points to the charitable relationship as one class interface in which a perceptional gulf between rich and poor is most likely. [72]

Evidence of duplicity offers a useful way of exploring this gulf. The suspicion that beggars were generally idle, dissolute individuals exploiting the generosity of the charitable runs through the

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68 F.K.Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., pp.366-73.
69 *Bristol Mercury* 4/1/1868, 21/3/1868.
70 *FFBJ* 23/5/1846, for the Whitsun 'Grand Temperance Festivals' at the Zoological Gardens which claimed 10,000 visitors, and *Bristol Mercury* 24/7/1858 for a Band of Hope Festival where 15,000 children from as far afield as Birmingham and Weymouth converged on Backfields in Bristol.
71 See above, Chapter 6, note 99.
72 Peter Bailey "Will the Real Bill Banks Please Stand Up?" Towards a Role Analysis of Mid-Victorian Working-Class Respectability' *Journal of Social History* 13, (1979), p.343.

literature of the period, and is still found in the late twentieth century. [73] Partly this reflected real examples of dissembling mendicants feigning distress: a personal house call bearing a begging letter with the forged signature of a local vicar was one successful technique. [74] It also demonstrates a more general unease that the desired reciprocity was not being achieved, and examples of deception and failure relayed in annual reports attest that this was a well-founded fear. The ever-candid Unitarian domestic missionaries noted several cases of pragmatism rather than submission:

> 'A poor woman, ... having become very straitened in her circumstances, one day observed that she must go to 'some place' (meaning some Church or Chapel) and see *what she could get*. 'Go', said the party addressed, 'to the ------ Chapel.' 'But', she replied, 'I must go round and see where I can get most!' She did go round, and obtained her object. It is thus that the poor learn to patronize their patrons, and make religion a stalking horse, for the most selfish purposes.' [75]

1868 brought another blow to the certainties of the philanthropic, with the discovery that a black market existed in hospital notes and mendicity tickets, obtained from gullible subscribers: an Infirmary in-patient note changed hands at 9d.-1s., while a Mendicity Society bread/coal ticket fetched 3d. [76]

These are anecdotes, and are not necessarily indicative of widespread deception of the charitable. What they do prove is the validity of a role-model analysis of the philanthropic relationship. They warn of the dangers of reading too much social consensus into working class participation in the voluntary world. Probably the dominant response of the poor to charity was guided by economic rationality, and even where very large numbers took part, the imbibing of values should not be

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[73] This was central to the philosophy of the Prudent Man's Friend Society, see *FFBJ* 1/11814; see also *Bristol Mercury* 13/1/1817 for a letter on 'Beggary' that claimed '..a regular system of impositions contrived by considerable numbers of street beggars, who arrange their several proceedings every morning', also 14/6/1819 for a 'Beggar on Horseback', and 29/11/1819 for 'A Sturdy Beggar'; also *FFBJ* 11/11/1826, letter 'The Police of the City', 21/2/1846, letter 'Suppression of Mendicity'; *Bristol Mercury* 13/3/1858, report of Bristol and Clifton Mendicity Society; *Bristol Gazette* 18/2/1835 reported a beggar found with a list he'd bought for 6d. of 'about a score of respectable families who might be called on by a person', detailing a convenient route to their houses and instructions on who to ask for; also 10/11/1836 'An Imposter'; later in the century, *Condition* op. cit., pp.179-80; more recently the Bristol magazine *Venue* 7/1/1994 reported, under the by-line 'Operation Grail Nets "Rich Beggars"', a policeman's assertion that some beggars made £100 a day.

[74] For forged recommendations, *FFBJ* 10/2/1838, 10/1/1846, and *Bristol Mercury* 22/5/1858, when the vagrant narrowly escaped a citizen's arrest.

[75] Ibid.BRL B7063 *5th Annual Report of the Lewins Mead Meeting Domestic Mission Society* (1844) p.14; for more flagrant duplicity, see BRL B7066 *12th. Annual Report...* (1855) p.5.

[76] *Bristol Mercury* 21/3/1868.

assumed. It may be that in some charities, jointly-held 'wholesome' beliefs were celebrated by middle class and working class alike, but it is impossible to establish whether such values extended beyond a particular section of the population. [77] For example, thousands may have participated in temperance activities, but Bristol's fabled reputation for hard-drinking was not appreciably altered. [78]

An association of charity with 'middle class values' is best avoided, but neither does the Bristol case study support Prochaska's emphasis on the significance of working class philanthropy: the numbers of low-born charity workers were too slight, and the attitude of recipients too uncertain to permit generalisations about the role of the voluntary sector in achieving social consensus. [79]

c) Charity and identity

A central point of R.J.Morris's characterisation of voluntarism as the site of class formation is the emphasis on the 'no religion, no politics' ethos proclaimed by many institutions. Although he allows for party and sectarian fissures in education and missionary work, this is portrayed as competition which aided class formation, while the unity of class purpose was ensured in other associations by an explicit language of inclusion. [80] The evidence for Bristol does not support this. Instead it seems that throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century philanthropy was riven with faction, and it was the inclusive charities that were the exception rather than the norm.

Viewed over the very long term partisan concerns, in which religion and politics were inextricably linked, often lay behind foundations. The early Corporation of the Poor (1696) was dogged by accusations that rather than rationalising the relief of poverty, the new body was really a 'Whig device' for poaching the rights to set and levy the rates from the Anglican vestries. [81]

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[77] Quotation, F.K.Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., p.366; for a well-documented discussion of working class ambivalence towards charity in the inter-war period see Bernard Harris, 'Responding to Advesity: Government-Charity Relations and the Relief of Unemployment in Interwar Britain' *Contemporary Record*, forthcoming, 1996, esp. Section 4: I'm grateful to the author for a preview of the article.

[78] *Condition* op. cit., pp.80-82: in 1883 Bristol was second only to Portsmouth in ratio of pubs to head of population (1:152, compared to 1:149); a Bristol Temperance Society census discovered that on one Saturday night in the city 98,226 persons entered a pub, out of a population of 206,374; for a brief summary of national trends see, Martin Pugh *State and Society. British Social and Political History 1870-1992* (London, 1994) pp.65-7: consumption patterns were linked to trends in real wages.

[79] Though the argument that philanthropic aspirations 'cut across class lines' is convincing, F.K.Prochaska 'Philanthropy' op. cit., p.366

[80] R.J.Morris *Class, Sect and Party* op. cit., ch.11.

[81] John Latimer *The Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Bristol, 1893) pp.32-5, 81, 102-3; Jonathan Barry 'The parish in civic life: Bristol and its churches 1640-1750', S.J.Wright ed. *Parish, Church and People* (London, 1988) op. cit.; a Poor

Likewise, although the foundation of the Infirmary was initially driven by a bi-partisan integrating impulse on the part of moral reformers, the disproportionate involvement of Quakers in the subscriber body rapidly conferred a distinct sectarian tinge. [82] Gradually this institution too was incorporated into the Tory Anglican ascendancy, which at the turn of the century dominated civic life; probably the turning point came in 1772 when subscribers body split over the desirability of appointing an Anglican chaplain - a fight which the non-conformists lost. [83] Bitter sectarian divisions had also characterised the charity school movement of the early eighteenth century. [84]

Party and sectarian identities continued to divide Bristol's middle class. [85] Studies of nineteenth century voting habits attest to the importance of religious affiliation in party choice, while the identification of the Church of England with Tories and dissent with the Whigs is well known. [86] This distinction was clearcut in the city. As shown in the discussion of the Charity Trustees, it was religion, even more than wealth or occupation, which distinguished the Tory elite from the new Liberals. [87] We have also noted the congruence of Tory and Anglican concerns in vestry politics. [88] Finally, we have seen that after the brief period of cross-party co-operation in voluntarism during the war years new formations were increasingly identified with particular congregations.

It is certainly true that the literature of voluntarism proclaimed the non-sectarian nature of appeals with monotonous regularity, but the very ubiquity of this claim is indicative of a consciousness of sectarianism. Thus we find: the Benevolent Evening School Society in 1811 stressing that pupils *could* come from any denomination; the Dorcas Society and Strangers Friend in

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Act was introduced by local Tories in 1714, exploiting their party's control of national government, which resolved the disputes by ruling that churchwardens automatically became Guardians of the Poor: thus the Corporation was integrated with the status quo. Junior churchwardens lost their position as Guardians after a Whig amendment to the Bristol Poor Law in 1718, but this does not appear to have altered the essentially Tory composition of the Corporation of the Poor.

82 Mary E.Fissell *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., pp.89-90; idem., 'The Physic of Charity' op. cit., p.88.

83 G.Munro Smith op. cit., pp.36-7: one angry trustee declared 'the House was no more in want of a Parson than it was of a fishpond!'

84 Mary E.Fissell 'Charity Universal...' op. cit., p.138; John Latimer *Annals ... Eighteenth Century* op. cit., pp.46-7.

85 Compare Philip Hills 'Division and Cohesion in the Nineteenth Century Middle Class: the Case of Ipswich 1830-70' *Urban History Yearbook* (1987) though Hills, citing Morris urges that associational life was a force of cohesion acting against disunity, p.47-8.

86 J.Phillips *Electoral Behaviour in Unreformed England* (Princeton, 1980); J.Vincent *Pollbooks: How Victorians Voted* (1967) ; R.G.Cowherd *The Politics of English Dissent* (New York, 1959); J.C.D.Clark's *English Society 1688-1832* (Cambridge, 1985) is the most extreme statement of the position that 'political and social spheres were conceived to overlap with the religious' p.348, and chs.4, 5, 6.

87 Though Liberals were aware of the potential pitfalls: as late as 1868 it was suggested that Samuel Morley's by-election defeat was partly caused by his non-conformity, *Bristol Mercury* 2/5/1868.

88 The campaign against Catholic Emancipation for example, and see above Chapter 5, notes 20, 21.

1814 declaring that they would *not* proselytize on behalf of sect or party or likewise discriminate in almsgiving; the Methodist Sunday School movement in 1816 hoping that their efforts would *not* be seen as 'a party thing'; the Bristol Missionary Society in 1836 promising that '..no episcopalian need be afraid to lose caste by mingling his praises with those of other distinguished men'; the newly formed YMCA in 1853 bemoaning the fact that the rival Church of England Young Men's Society was refusing to disband and unite with them; the volunteer enumerators of the Sunday School census in 1858 complaining that 'the clergy of the Established Church declined to unite with them' despite their non-denominational aims; the Bristol United City Mission justifying its establishment in the same year on the grounds of the need for a non-denominational mission. [89] It is true that emergencies could, and did, make strange bedfellows, like the St Mary Redcliffe Soup Society, started in 1847-8, which found such prominent dissenters as George Thomas, Joseph Eaton and Conrad Finzel on a vestry committee to build a 'soup-house' for poor parishioners. [90] Nonetheless the overriding tone of the sources points to an abiding awareness of division. The Unitarian surgeon John B.Estlin explained matters thus to an American correspondent in 1846: '...in educational and religious projects, the members of the Establishment do not like any other to unite with them in charitable & even literary instit. parties, especially political ones act together, & the management generally falls to the strongest'. [91]

Educational voluntarism inevitably focused division. For example, in 1825 the Bishop of Bristol attacked the formation of the Mechanics Institution in as a dangerous threat to the education based on 'moral improvement' obtainable in a National School; this was also the line of the Tory *Journal* which condemned it as a threat to social stability. [92] Seventeen years later the educational clauses in the 1843 Factory Act found the non-conformists alarmed by Government proposals that factory

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89 *FFBJ* 9/2/1811, 16/7/1814, 20/8/1814; BRL B10398 John S.Broad *A History of the Origins and Progress of the Sunday Schools in the City of Bristol* (Bristol, 1816) pp.59-61; *Bristol Gazette* 29/9/1836; BRL B1533 *Address delivered at the Broadmead Room Tuesday, June 14th. 1853, at the Inaugural Gathering of the Young Men's Christian Association* pp.12-3; *Bristol Mercury* 24/4/1858, 12/6/158

90 St Mary Redcliffe *Vestry Soup Society Minutes 1854-61.*

91 Clare Taylor *British and American Abolitonists. An Episode in Transatlantic Understanding* (Edinburgh, 1974) p.257, letter to Maria Weston Chapman.

92 *The Trades' Newspaper and Mechanics Weekly Journal* 28/2/1825; FFBJ 18/6/1825; in the event a bi-partisan approach was adopted and the project was started, though see ch.8 for its generally unsuccessful career; see also Peter Brett 'The Liberal Middle Classes and Politics in three provincial towns - Newcastle, Bristol and York - c.1812-1841' unpublished Ph.D thesis University of Durham (1991), pp. 169-171.

school committees should be chaired by local Anglican clergy. At a mass meeting in defence of religious liberty in schools the leading figures of Bristol Liberal dissent, George Thomas, Richard Ash and H.O.Wills shared a platform to attack the legislature. [93] As shown above, religious division was still prominent in the elections to the first Bristol School Board in 1871. [94]

Even societies founded in a flush of enthusiasm for unity were not immune. For example the evangelical Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society had explicitly opened its committee and visiting activities to 'parochial clergy and dissenting ministers'. [95] At a time of intense party feuding in 1838, the Liberal press pointed out that dissenting collections had contributed far more to the society's coffers than had those of the established church. [96] Tabulated accounts for 1810-1835 were carefully reproduced, naming particular churches and evangelical vicars, and the inevitable row ensued. Nor were cultural institutions, which were perhaps the most integrated of all, exempt from dissension, though here the lines of fracture were not so clearcut. In 1846 the Committee of the Zoological Society had a heated debate on the propriety of opening the gardens on Sundays, with divison not on the usual party/sect lines, but in accordance with the seriousness with which members took their sabbatarianism. [97]

Why did voluntary charities act as a platform for competing political and religious identities ? The tendency arose from the access they offered to fields of civic power. These ranged from the microcosmic concerns of governing asylums and schools, to voting and management rights in more prestigous institutions, to the necessary accoutrements of those who sought to represent the city at Corporate or Parliamentary level. These will be considered in turn.

The Asylum of Poor Orphan Girls was a small scale voluntary charity, with annual subscriptions accounting for about half of its income in the early nineteenth century. [98] A two guinea subscription

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[93] M.J.Campbell 'The Development of Literacy in Bristol and Gloucester 1755-1870' unpublished Ph.D thesis University of Bath (1980) pp.98-102.

[94] See above, Chapter 8 d).

[95] BRL B3951 *Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society*, Eighth Report (1817).

[96] *Bristol Mercury* 13/1/1838: between 1810 and 1835 dissenters collected £2,924 and Anglicans £1,963.

[97] *FFBJ* 13/6/1846: for instance, Tory Anglican John Kerle Haberfield and Liberal Congregationalist Richard Ash united to support the motion for opening, which was eventually defeated; see also *Bristol Mercury* 2/1/1858, 16/1/1858, 30/1/1858 for a dispute over religious 'speculation' in the Athenaeum's Essay and Discussion Society.

[98] Though it should be more properly seen as a hybrid, with legacies and investment income contributing too, see BRL B9780 *State of the Orphan Asylum for the Year 1821.*

purchased a Guardianship for the year which entitled one to recommend orphaned children for admission to the Asylum. Nominations could be applied to children resident in the Guardian's parish or within a one mile radius, thus conferring a similar status as local almoner as that attached to membership of a select vestry. [99] Applications were then put before the Committee, whose Quarterly Boards were open to Guardians, and whose membership was chosen by election from the subscriber body. [100] The critieria used made direct reference to the Poor Law: the preferred inmate was a child whose parents had resided in Bristol, but who did not have a settlement. Beyond this, a personal interview with the child accompanied by the Guardian was the means of selection. [101] So, by purchasing a subscription the donors acquired a small slice of municipal power outside the 'official' network of vestries and corporate bodies, which conferred status at parochial level, a capacity to exercise patronage and some institutional control.

Bristolians in the mid-nineteenth century liked to quip that '...patients going to the Infirmary could expect a sovereign remedy, while those going to the Hospital would receive a radical cure'. [102] This was no hollow joke but a perception that would have been obvious to any politically conscious citizen. *Table 10.3* (over) shows voting choices of surgeons, physicians and officers in 1812, 1832 and 1847, all years in which elections were hotly contested, and the platforms offered clear choices. The Infirmary's Tory stamp is clear. [103] In 1812 the favoured vote was the Tory/'old Whig' split with one Tory plumper: Edward Protheroe, the 'old Whig' candidate, was quite acceptable to Tories as he opposed Catholic Emancipation and was lukewarm on reform. [104] By the 1830s a clear contrast emerged between the Infirmary, again favouring the Tory/conservative Whig split, and the General, divided between those who plumped for Baillie, the 'old Whig', and those who split between Edward Protheroe jr., the abolitionist reform Whig, and John Williams the Reformer. In 1847 the General's faculty plumped for Francis Fitzhardinge Berkeley, while Infirmary staff were

99 The vast majority in 1821 were Bristolians, though Hannah More in Somerset and Sarah Fry of Essex also appear.
100 Though female Guardians could only issue their votes by proxy, see BRL B9780.
101 For an example of the rules governing Quarterly Boards, see *Bristol Gazette* 13/3/1806, *FFBJ* 12/3/1814.
102 C.Bruce Perry *The Bristol Medical School* (Bristol, 1984) p.9.
103 Mary Fissell observes the phenomenon, notes that it was 'odd', but does not pursue it: *Patients, Power and the Poor* op. cit., p.227.
104 Peter Brett op. cit., pp.93-4; A.B.Beaven op. cit., p.171.

divided between those able to accept the manifest contradictions of a split Tory ticket, and those who plumped loyally for the 'old Tory', Philip Miles.

Table 10.3 Voting choices: officers and faculties, Bristol Infirmary, General Hospital, 1812, 1832, 1847

	Plumpers				*Splitters*			*not*
	T	*W*	*RW*	*R*	*T/W*	*T/T*	*RW/R*	*found*
1812								
Infirmary	1				3			6
1832								
Infirmary	1				7			2
General		2					3	3
1847								
Infirmary	4				1	3		4
General		3						4

T = Tory, W = Whig, RW = Reform Whig, R = Radical/Reformer.

Source: Bristol Poll Books, 1812, 1832, 1847; Bristol Trade Directories, 1812, 1831, 1832, 1847. [105]

Hospitals flagged their political colours to supporters through their patrons. The General Hospital's first President was Lord Grenville, whose family assocation with Bristol whiggery was well established.[106] Between 1849 and 1869 the Quaker George Thomas was President/Treasurer. His role as a Liberal councillor and Charity Trustee, and his prominent position in the Anti-Corn Law League and support of Liberalism in National elections has already been mentioned. [107] In 1844 the vice-presidents were two 'old Whigs', James Evan Baillie M.P., and councillor Christopher George, and they were shortly joined by Joseph Eaton, the Temperance Quaker who campaigned against slavery and the Corn Laws. [108] Of course, complete partisanship was never favoured as this

[105] The names of the surgeons, physicians and officers were found in the Trade Directories and their addresses checked. These were then checked against the poll books, and where the given address did not lead to an identification in the appropriate electoral wards, the remaining wards were searched. A large proportion were not found, and this may be attributed to a) failure to exercise vote b) lack of franchise c) holding franchise in another constituency d) the margin of human error in the search of poll books. Whatever the reasons, the existing results are so clear cut that it is most unlikely to be skewed by the 'not founds'.

[106] Graham Bush *Bristol and its Municipal Government 1820-1851* (Bristol, 1976) p.20; Peter Brett op. cit., p.89.

[107] See above, Chapter 4; J.F.Nicholls *Bristol Biographies. Life of George Thomas* (Bristol, 1870) noted of Thomas' support for the Liberal Association, that he was '..perhaps the largest contributor to its funds'.

[108] BRL *Report of the Bristol General Hospital for the year ending 1843*; for Eaton *Bristol Mercury* 22/5/1858.

might alienate potential subscribers: Tory M.P. Richard Vyvyan was a vice-president in the 1840s, and Conservative mayor Richard Poole King in the 1850s, though King was perceived as reformer due to his support for dock municipalization. [109] Party politics and medical charity also came together in the election of doctors, where a candidate's party stripe was also a career attribute. [110] Prospective faculty members would embark on a canvass of subscribers once an impending vacancy was made known. [111] This might involve announcing one's candidacy and placing letters of recommendation in the local press, or less public methods, drawing on loyalty networks of family and associational life. [112]

Personal benevolence and a willingness to support philanthropic causes were two desirable attributes of nineteenth century public figures. An example from local politics is the Tory John Kerle Haberfield. In a municipal career between 1835 and 1857 he was six times mayor, alderman, magistrate, town councillor, Charity Trustee, seven times Governor of the Corporation of the Poor, and chair of the Bristol Waterworks Company. His obituaries concurred that '..he will be remembered and revered as the princely philanthropist', and that his good nature '...loosened his purse-strings to all our benevolent institutions'. [113] Philanthropists and publicists sought political capital by identifying their causes with civic reputation: '..to the honor of the merchants, gentry, clergy, and opulent Citizens of Bristol, who know the way to their pockets, and have hearts and hands ready to compassionate the distressed...'. [114] Reference to the efforts of rival cities and local tradition became a standard device in charitable appeals. [115] Thus identification of charity with civic pride sustained the value of philanthropic prominence to politicians.

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109 Graham Bush op. cit., pp.170-2.

110 For example, in the 1812 Infirmary election of a new surgeon, a dismal third place in the poll went to John Bishop Estlin: he was a Unitarian who voted for Samuel Romilly, see A.B.Beaven op. cit., p.259, *Bristol Poll Book* 1812.

111 For example, *Bristol Gazette* 13/3/1806, 10/4/1806 canvasses from William Hetling, Henry Daniel, F.Bowles, R.Edgell, Richard Lowe, N.Smith and Samuel Watts.

112 BRO 35893 36 Richard Smith Memoirs vol.xiv: the collection contains examples of solicitation for votes, some elaborately printed testimonials, and includes one from 1845 which drew on Masonic links.

113 See the clippings collected in BRO 06527 *Memorial scrapbook of John Kerle Haberfield*; reminiscing twenty years after his death, the *Bristol Times and Mirror*, 24/2/1877 noted his '...liking to hear through the newspapers the ring of his gold when he cast it into the treasury', suggesting that the perception of benevolence could also be sceptical.

114 W.Matthews *The New History, Survey and Description of the City and Suburbs of Bristol* (Bristol, 1794) p.88.

115 *FFBJ* 5/3/1814, 'Distress in Germany'; *Bristol Mercury* 18/11/1816, Reynolds Commemoration Society; *Bristol Mirror* 20/5/1826, 'Distressed Manufacturers'; *Bristol Mercury* 20/2/1858, Infirmary building extensions.

The association of charity and character was also common currency in national political discourse. Here a perceived lack of charity could work against ambition, as in the vituperative campaign directed against William Fripp in the 1841 general election. A poster urged voters to: 'Try Mr Fripp again by his charitable contributions and you may look in vain for his name, except among the subscribers to the Bristol Infirmary, in which Institution, it is notorious he carries his party principles to a shameful excess'. [116] As late as 1868 a Liberal puff for Samuel Morley reminded readers that he '...has already made himself a national reputation for his almost unbounded philanthropy and munificence ... his generous yet discriminating sympathies towards the working classes have made his name dear to tens of thousands who have never seen his face'. [117]

The significance of religion and politics can also be traced in the women's charities, though here the meaning of voluntarism overlapped with the concerns of gender. The Lying-In Institution may or may not have had a recognisable sectarian stamp, but its attitude to women in need of care during childbirth was markedly more generous than that of the male-led Dispensary. Recipients could be 'Casual Poor' and were not required to be 'Inhabitants of this city', nor was there a firm specification in the rules that they had to be married. [118] The interplay between charitable work, feminism and sectarianism is most obvious in the case of female anti-slavery; in Bristol the links of personnel connecting abolitionism to the suffrage campaign are clear. [119] A language of rights which promoted the emancipation of slaves also asserted women abolitionists' right to a public platform, and equally important was the connection with Garrisonians in America, with whom the divisive question of equal female participation had originated. [120] *Table 10.4* (over) shows that Bristol's female abolitionists originated from the city's non-conformist culture of missionary action. Initially

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116 Poster in BRL *A Collection of broadsides, addresses, notices, etc., relating to the election of 1841*; see also *A Collection ... election of 1847* for his failure to subscribe to Pile St. school and the St. Mary Redcliffe restoration fund.

117 *Bristol Mercury* 25/5/1868.

118 BRO 35893 (36) n vol xiv, see above, Chapter 8, note 109.

119 Clare Midgley *Women against slavery: the British campaigns* 1780-1860 (London, 1991), whose key arguments for the discussion here are summarised in idem., 'Anti-Slavery and Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Gender and History* 5, 3, (1993) pp.343-362; according to R.J.Morris 'Clubs, societies and associations' op. cit., pp.432-3, it was anti-slavery which renewed the push against the 'gender frontier' that inhibited female philanthropy; Barbara Taylor *Eve and the New Jerusalem* (London, 1983) p.277; Bristol, see Ellen Malos 'Bristol Women in Action, 1838-1919: The right to vote and the right to earn a living', Ian Bild ed. *Bristol's Other History* (Bristol, 1983) pp.98, 104-6..

120 Clare Midgley 'Anti-Slavery', passim.; for America, Louis Filler *The Crusade Against Slavery 1830-1860* (London, 1960) pp.130-6.

the Society was dominated by Quakers and Congregationalists, with seven of the women wives of Congregationalist or Baptist ministers. As shown already, in its early years the Society worked quietly and undemonstratively raising small sums and, in 1843, preferring the more decorous approach of petitioning to the idea of sending a delegate to the Anti-Slavery Convention. [121] The shift towards the Garrisonian position and the eventual disaffiliation with the parent society due to its failure to provide a women's platform can be traced to the arrival of two Unitarians, Mary Estlin and Miss G.Armstrong, who were inspired by the visits of Garrison and Douglass. [122] Mary Estlin provides the key link with later campaigns; she was one of Josephine Butler's 'corps d'elite', and was also involved with the early suffrage campaign. Her collected correspondence contains various letters from prominent American feminists. [123]

Table 10.4 Religious affiliation of Bristol and Clifton Ladies Anti-Slavery Society members, 1840s

Congregationalist	11
Quaker	13
Unitarian	4
Baptist	2
not known	5

Source: BRO microfim, Estlin Papers, reel 5; Congregationalist: BRO B16885 *15th. Annual Report of the Bristol City Mission*, and Trade Directory listing of dissenting preachers (also Baptist); Quakers: BRO SF/R3/3 *List of Members of the Bristol (Monthly Meeting) Society of Friends*; Unitarians: BRO 39461/F/4b) *Subscription Book.*

It does not appear that in the nation at large dissenting circles wielded exceptional influence in the growth of feminism. [124] Why should they have been of particular importance in Bristol ? The unusual strength of the city's non-conformist tradition, and the residual identification of anti-slavery with the political struggle against the pre-Reform Tory/Anglican establishment is one factor. This may have fortified oppositional attitudes and bred an early familiarity with a language of equal rights. There were also institutional factors. Female Quakers had long been used to the financial,

121 See Chapter 8 c); BRL microfilm *Estlin Papers* Reel 5 'Minute Book of the Bristol and Clifton Auxiliary Ladies Anti-Slavery Society, 1840-61', 27/2/1843, 2/3/1843, 6/4/1843.
122 Ibid., 10/9/1846 for Estlin and Armstrong.
123 Ellen Malos op. cit., pp.99-100, 106, fn.21; BRL microfilm *Estlin Papers.*
124 Olive Banks op. cit.

administrative and poor relief responsibilities delegated within the Society of Friends to the Women's Monthly Meeting. [125] Also the Ladies Anti-Slavery Society's activists were well-versed in female-led domestic mission work: Committee member Diana Roper was simultaneously Secretary of the Bristol Dorcas Society, while Mary Estlin was a member of the Lewins Mead Working and Visiting Society. [126] A third factor was the milieu of Bristol Unitarianism, with its provision of a more equal education for girls, and its attraction to internationalist concerns. [127] Despite the limits to independence from male supervision then, non-conformist female charities did nurture proto-feminism.

To what extent did philanthropy articulate a shared national identity ? In the atmosphere of social dislocation during the French Wars it was activated as a countervailing force, a channel of paternal aid and of order. [128] The language of charity reflected the heightened and inclusive sense of British national identity which the war effort encouraged. [129] Thus a supporter of the Colston societies daubed them in patriotic colours: 'In what other country ... are individuals to be found ... thus bountifully to give assistance to their fellow creatures ? Let the indigent amongst us reflect ... that were the Corsican tyrant and his Slaves to acquire the ascendancy here, all such sources ... would instantly be dried up'. [130] Philanthropy became a forum in which the now acceptable plebian patriots could be idealised. The PMFS asserted that begging was alien to the 'dignified spirit' of the English, owing to 'Our national industry, the free spirit of our constitution, and the comparatively large portion of information which is diffused among all ranks'. [131] An emergency subscription levied during the unemployment crisis of early 1817 aimed '...to prevent an increase of the

125 BRO SF/A2/2-7 for *Minutes of Women's Monthly Meeting*, 1781-1873.
126 BRO 39399/CD/S/3 d) 32nd. Annual Report of the Bristol Dorcas Society (1841); BRL B7057 4th. Report of the Lewins Mead Chapel Working and Visiting Society.
127 Illustrated by the career of Mary Carpenter, see ch.8, notes 142-4, and for her interest in India, Rohit Barot *Bristol and the Indian Independence Movement* (Bristol, 1988) pp.3-9.
128 Frank Prochaska *The Voluntary Impulse* op. cit., p.21; David Owen *English Philanthropy 1660-1960* (London, 1965) pp.97-8.
129 For the impact of the war years on national identity, Linda Colley *Britons. Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Yale, 1992), chs 7 & 8.
130 *FFBJ* 19/11/1803; also 1/10/1803, 19/2/1814, 5/3/1814, subscriptions for home defenses, and support of Britain's allies.
131 Ibid., 24/12/1814.

degradation of that honest sentiment which is the birthright of every Briton, however low he may rank in Society'. [132]

Belief in the superiority of Britishness flowered on the international stage in the wake of imperial expansion, which was in turn regarded as part of the divine plan: '...the providence of God has made the scourge of war the means of affording enlarged opportunities for missionary efforts'. [133] For example, the Indian Mutiny was regarded as a sign of Britain's special global destiny. An address to the YMCA asserted that '...we claim to have part in every transaction which takes place in the world, because we have been appointed by God to make a noble stand for the cross of Christ...'. [134] Britain's task was paternal stewardship: 'If they abandoned India there would be no irrigation, no improvement of their culture; there would be no roads or railroads, and that country ... would be the degraded half-dead thing it had been'. [135] As Britishness came to be defined increasingly in terms of racial stratification, the language of good intentions deployed by philanthropists helped shape a perception of otherness. [136] Blackness was a pervasive motif in speeches: 'Light is beginning to dawn upon the Caffres and the darkness dispelled'; '...ere long they should see the black man ... as white in soul and beautiful in character as the fairest European'. [137] Indeed, the language of otherness was equally applied to the uncharted regions of Bristol's slums The first pupils of the Methodist Sunday Schools were 'Wild as the untaught Indian's brood', with hair 'like Eagles' feathers', while poor children were commonly labelled 'street Arab'. [138]

The voluntary sector therefore provided a forum in which notions of Britishness were expressed, whether in the imagery of the friendly societies or in the language and assumptions of missionary charity. However, the degree to which this shaping of identity was uncontested should not be overstated. For example, the recognition that Protestantism was the original defining force in

132 *Bristol Mercury* 3/2/1817.

133 Ibid., 27/3/1858, Church Missionary Society, see also *FFBJ* 28/11/1846, for SPCK applying these sentiments to the 'opium war'.

134 *Bristol Mercury* 30/1/1858, and see also 23/1/1858.

135 Ibid., 23/10/1858, address by Rev.W.Noel to the Baptist Missionary Society.

136 For the impact of racial thought on foreign missions, Catherine Hall 'From Greenland's Icy Mountains ... to Afric's Golden sand': Ethnicity, Race and Nation in Mid-Nineteenth Century England', *Gender and History* 5, 2, (1993) 212-230.

137 *Bristol Gazette* 29/9/1836 address by 'Caffre Chief' to Bristol Missionary Society; *Bristol Mercury* 27/3/1858 address by Rev. Hugh Stowell to the Church Missionary Society; see also 15/5/1858, Wesleyan Methodist Mission.

138 John S.Broad op. cit., pp.11, 16; by the 1860s 'street Arab' was a common colloquialism in Police reports, eg. *Bristol Mercury* 7/3/1868, '...Robert Barry, a street Arab, twelve years of age...' who was imprisoned for 14 days for stealing coal.

British national identity does not mean that all shared in the Evangelical zeal for the 'unprivileging of minorities who would not conform'. [139] In particular the several charities directed at weaning the Irish from Catholicism probably had a strong political context, since they emerged at the time of the furore surrounding Catholic Emancipation in the 1820s. [140] The role of anti-slavery in the redefinition of British self-image is also increasingly recognised, though here again the issue was hotly disputed in Bristol elections. [141] Nor did everyone approve of the tendency of the charitable to be '...far more interested in the condition of 'Borriaboola Gha' than in the White Slaves of London'. [142]

Conclusion

In his study of the motives of blood donors Richard Titmuss argued that Mauss' status/reciprocity formula was insufficient to explain the 'gift relationship', as it left no room for altruism. [143] This discussion has been more concerned with the social meaning of voluntarism and has not considered the importance of individual kindness. Perhaps, as Jordan warned in his seminal work, motivation is beyond a full historical recovery. [144] By their nature, the written sources that yield clues as to the benevolent impulse push interpretation towards the external identities of donors, rather than interior reasons. Even those appeals which stressed personal feelings instead of broader social goals were framed in terms of rewards and fears:

> 'There are delicious emotions excited in our hearts by the consciousness of doing good, so that habitually to withhold our hands from misery, lest our benevolence be misplaced, would tend at once to contract the heart to selfishness, and would prove a greater loss to ourselves than to those whom we deny our compassion'. [145]

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139 Linda Colley *Britons* op. cit., ch.1, esp. pp.18-30, quote p.53.

140 Bristol Auxiliary Reformation Society, the Auxiliary Hibernian Society for the Promotion of Scriptural Education in Ireland, the Bristol and Clifton Association for the Moral and Religious Improvement of Ireland, and in the 1830s, the Bristol Protestant Association; see *Britons* op. cit., pp.324-334; they also drew on the long tradition of anti-Jacobinism, see BRO P/StJ/V/7 1/12/1828.

141 Catherine Hall 'From Greenland's Icy Mountains' op. cit., esp. pp.216-9; idem., *White, Male and Middle-Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge, 1992) ch.9; Linda Colley *Britons* op. cit., pp.350-360; anti-slavery and elections, Peter Marshall *Bristol and the Abolition of Slavery: The Politics of Emancipation* (Bristol, 1975).

142 *Bristol Mercury* 6/2/1858 for a public meeting addressed by an East India Company director urging greater respect for Hinduism, and editorial, 13/3/1858, for the quote, which refers to Dickens' satirical portrait in *Bleak House*; see also 8/5/1858 for Symonds attack on missionary spending rather than the General Hospital's appeal, mentioned above, Chapter 9, note 74.

143 R.M.Titmuss *The Gift Relationship* (London, 1970).

144 See above, Chapter 1a).

145 BRL 4643 *Report of the Samaritan Society* (1835).

This is not to say that an entirely selfless love of others - 'caritas' - did not motivate philanthropists, nor that public spirit and a sense of social solidarity was absent. The problem is that surviving evidence directs us to social meaning rather than the unadulterated feelings of benevolence. This is because 'voluntarism is caused', in other words it was *more* than like-minded individuals spontaneously following a common interest; membership was socially rooted in other groupings within the community. [146] Consequently, where charity took the form of associative democracy it inevitably became laden with other concerns. A trenchant sermon given by the Lord Bishop of Fredrickton to the Canynges Society in 1858 captured the tension well:

> 'Compared with these high ennobling motives of the love of Christ, the value of souls, the stewardship, and account we must all soon give at God's judgement seat, how base is the metal of which many incentives to charity are composed ? Men do not ask what is the love of Christ to me, but what does my neighbour intend to give ? Show me, they cry, the subscription list. Will it be published to the world ? Will my name be there, and will I claim credit and popularity by the subscription ? Will my political friends (suppose you) think well of it ? Such is the world, and when they have exhausted all the flattering arts of beggary and nothing more can be wrung out by fear or favour, then let us have a bazaar, and dress up our charity with the amusement and the tricks of trade. Let us buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market, let us make money by fantastic devices, amidst laughter and merriment and cavilling, and let us call it charity. Call it what you please, this is not true love to God in the soul of man.' [147]

146 Jack C.Ross 'Toward a reconstruction of voluntary association theory' *British Journal of Sociology* 23, (1972) pp.20-30, quotation p.28.
147 *Bristol Mirror* 7/8/1858.

Section III

Conclusion

The argument presented here has emphasized the manner in which voluntary charity reflected fragmentation and division within the middle class. Of course, philanthropy had always been inherently a relationship between rich and poor, have and have-not, but it does not appear that a new, coherent class purpose characterised charity in this period. The transient unity of the middle class during the war period was expressed in support for a few charities, but this was soon followed by a fracturing along political and religious lines. Traditions of paternalism persisted despite regular advocacy of more discriminatory benevolence. In place of class formation dependent on economic change, the 'take-off' of voluntary charity in Bristol should be seen as the product of cultural shifts and external pressures. The unifying effect of the war coincided with the period when poverty placed a heavy demand on the city's resources: out-poor numbers rose from 1,496 in 1772, to 2,898 in 1800, to 6,582 in 1820. [1] At an internal level the popularity of evangelical thought with its stress on sin, conversion and atonement was another powerful factor. [2] War and religion also help explain the entry of women into the philanthropic world in the early nineteenth century. The Evangelical revival held a special attraction for women, and Hannah More's articulation of a specifically female 'calling' and duty was illustrative of the way women connected 'vital Christianity' and with the need to perform charitable works. [3] Despite the concurrent rhetoric of separate spheres, female patriotism during the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars legitimised new claims to citizenship and a voice in society which carried over to philanthropy and reform campaigns after the war.[4]

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1 *Reports from the Committees of the House of Commons vol. x Provisions; Poor; 1774-1802*: 1787 *Further Appendix to the* 1787 *Report from the Committee on Certain Returns relative to the State of the Poor, and to Charitable Donations, & c.*; J.B.Kington op. cit., p.311.

2 For evangelical voluntarism, see Ian Bradley *The Call to Seriousness. The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (London, 1976) chs.4, 5, 6, 7 passim; Ford K.Brown *Fathers of the Victorians. The Age of Wilberforce* (Cambridge, 1961) chs.7, 9, 10; D.W.Bebbington *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain. A History From the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 1989) ch.4; Boyd Hilton *The Age of Atonement* (Oxford, 1988) pp.100-108.

3 F.K.Prochaska *Women and Philanthropy* op. cit., pp.1-17; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall op. cit., pp.429-31; R.J.Morris 'Clubs, societies and associations' op. cit., p.430; for female Evangelicalism, D.W.Bebbington op. cit., pp.128-9.

4 Linda Colley *Britons* op. cit., pp.237-81.

Evaluation of the social and economic impact of voluntary charity is constrained by the fragmentary nature of the surviving sources. Nonetheless the evidence from Bristol did not reveal a significant working class presence in the running or financing of charity, nor could it be argued with confidence that charity was a site of shared, cross-class, values. [5] Conversely, voluntarism could not be characterised as a crude 'social control' device. Despite the appearance of languages of class management in some of the appeals, and despite the capacity to marshall a response to short term crises, there was no sustained relationship between peaks of charity income and moments of potential political disturbance. [6] Financial records suggested instead that the economic histories of charities were not driven by fluctuations in demand - the need of recipients - or supply - the capacity of subscribers to give. The key factors were more unpredictable: the slow accumulation of capital through legacies, the inspiration of a charismatic leader, the enthusiasm and support of a particular congregation, faddishness for a popular cause, and so on. This conclusion pointed to the strengths of voluntarism as a means of mobilizing social action, but also to its shortcomings as a means of funding social policy. Assessment of charity's success relative to market, mutualist or government responses to social need is extremely difficult. It would be absurd to deny the security and welcome relief voluntarism offered, but it is most unlikely that the funds directed to the poor matched the contribution of Poor Law or friendly society payments, and the analysis of charity's role in raising literacy and lowering mortality cautioned against celebratory accounts. [7]

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5 For the absence of working-class charity in Liverpool, see Margaret Simey *Charity Rediscovered: A Study of Philanthropic Effort in Nineteenth-Century Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1992) pp.144-5.

6 See above, Chapter 9 d), and for a critique of the historical application of 'social control' theory, F.M.L.Thompson 'Social Control in Victorian Britain' *The Economic History Review*, xxxiv, 2, (1981) pp.189-208.

7 Poor Law: Robert Humphreys *Bygone Charity - Myths and Realities* LSE Working Paper no. 23/94 (1994) pp.7-10, and see the discussion in Chapter 3 d) above.

Chapter 11

Conclusion

This study began by referring to recent trends in the historiography of social policy which sought to avoid 'welfare whiggery'. Its aim was to explore the voluntarist welfare institutions of civil society, an area differentiated firstly from private and commercial solutions to need, and secondly from state provision; and, in the spirit of recent work it made no prior assumption that charitable and mutualist approaches were inherently foredoomed to become 'junior partner in the welfare state'. [1] Nonetheless, the findings do prompt questions about the relationship between public and private welfare systems over the longer term, and it is with these that I wish to conclude. The timespan of the study does not extend to the foundation of the welfare state proper, so my focus is not so much on perceptions of voluntarism at the dawn of far-reaching state intervention, but rather on tendencies which made that intervention possible. In particular I will point to four themes:

i) institutional rationalization to improve effectiveness

ii) a shift in the perception of philanthropy and mutuality from areas of private and independent activity to areas of public interest

iii) a sustained relationship between government and voluntary or charitable institutions, and the related implausibility of characterising them as a politically neutral terrain

iv) the limits to the practical achievements of voluntarism

We see these themes clearly in the case of endowed charity, whose nineteenth century history saw both the decline of its traditional form - the trust administered by parish or corporation - and the appearance of state supervision by the Charity Commission. Gilbert's Enquiry marked the beginning of a process which culminated in the Endowed Schools Act, a process by which the perception of an endowment as essentially the private property of its trustees, shifted to one in which it was regarded as a public benefit. Indeed, by 1869 one pole of opinion in the national debate held that successful application of endowed charity could *only* be achieved '...in accordance with the

[1] David Owen *English Philanthropy 1660-1960* (London, 1964), Part Four

supreme intelligence and will of the nation, as represented in Parliament'.[2] True, the powers of the Charity Commission were to remain limited, and drastic alterations to testators' wishes did not extend beyond the Endowed Schools Act (1869) and the City Parochial Charities Act (1883). However, Bristol's experience demonstrates that at local level this emergence of a notion of charity as public good was very real, arising as it did from the broader question of administrative probity which was a central theme of Reform politics.

If we seek a theoretical explanation of this shift, then Max Weber's examination of the rationalising and bureacratising tendencies in complex organisations fits the case particularly well. The spiralling cost of poor relief, coupled with the apparent failure of trusts to maximise income efficiently prompted reform. This effected the removal of endowed charity from unaccountable management, and although supervision remained in the hands of volunteers it was now underpinned by established procedures, by the background role of government and civil service, and by an ethos of public obligation. In this respect Habermas's thought is also helpful. The creation of public opinion in favour of openness and accountability ('the principle of supervision - that very principle which demands that proceedings be made public') was a central achievement of the conviction journalism of the 'public sphere'. [3] Thus the national debates in the *Quarterly Review* and the *Edinburgh Review*, and the campaigning zeal of that demagogue of the middle classes Henry Brougham, brought charity within the purlieu of accountability which was already accepted in some areas of the civil service. [4] The new charity trustees in Bristol were highly conscious of answerability, publishing their accounts in the press, ostentatiously foregoing perquisites such as dinners, and so on.

That said, these insights can only partially explain what was in reality a more complex and ambiguously motivated transition. Party interest vied with the public good in Henry Brougham's actions, and in Bristol the use of the charities issue to effectively democratize closed institutions

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[2] Joshua Fitch *Fraser's Magazine* (January, 1869), cited in Lord Beveridge *Voluntary Action: A Report on Methods of Social Advance* (London, 1948) p.196; others favoured restraining testators' rights by further empowering Charity Commissioners and local councils, see Sir Arthur Hobhouse *The Dead Hand: Addresses on Endowments* (London, 1880), pp.46, 121, 237-9.

[3] Jurgen Habermas 'The Public Sphere' *New German Critique* 3 (1974) pp.52-3.

[4] John Torrance 'Social Class and Bureaucratic Innovation: the Commissioners for Examining the Public Accounts 1780-1781' *Past and Present* 78, (1978) pp.56-81.

built upon, and extended a long tradition of accusing electoral victors of misuse of charity funds. Nor did public opinion locally ever consistently debate the issue of the endowed charities in the context of their more efficient *use* in tackling social problems; despite occasional references by Hunt to the rights of the poor, or by Cranidge to the possible impact on the heavy poor rates, the overriding frame of the debate was the question of administrative trustworthiness, and its party implications. When the Liberal trustees had finally emerged victorious, their commitment to accountability did not preclude their very traditional use of charity in civic display to legitimize their acquisition of power. Nor can they be convincingly portrayed as new men representing a new ethic. Political alliances were too fluid on some issues, and too conditioned by religious adherence. In sum, it is not enough to assert an inexorable progress from inefficient to effective, or from closed to open, driven by the hidden hand of modernization. The timing and sequence of events were determined instead by the outcome of political contests in which charity was important not as an immanent issue, but as a symbol of administrative probity used to castigate opponents.

This combination of functional imperatives and party strife also helps explain why, despite the marked increase in income shown by the second Charity Commission Report (1868-76), state supervision did not lead to the rejuvenation of endowed charity. The enthusiasm of donors turned away from the trust as a favoured type of philanthropy, despite its attraction of perpetual generation of funds, and the traditional practice of endowing bequests to the parish or Corporation became considerably less typical. Rationalization provides part of the explanation as the supersession of the parish as the core unit of local government by newer, city-wide bodies diminished its suitability as a channel for benevolent distribution. Here too, the growing demand for accountability and participatory debate was important, prompting the shift of philanthropic interest towards subscription charities, which offered these features. And once again the conjunctural role of political debate influenced the flow of events, as Radicals, reform Whigs and dissenters criticized both the parish and the Corporation as bastions of Tory/Anglican exclusivity; the resultant publicity and argument coincided with the fall-off in new endowments, suggesting that the increasingly negative image deterred donors.

Functional demands of local government and the evolving political culture thus joined to accomplish the shift in the perception of endowed charities from private trusts to institutions of public good. Yet this transition coincided with the point at which, even in an old town like Bristol with a huge accumulation of endowments, their share of the welfare budget was diminishing before the greater flexibility of the Poor Law and the greater attractions of voluntary asssociations.

The themes of rationalisation and state supervision also inform the history of friendly societies in the period under view. At the end of the eighteenth century these were staunchly independent and insular, overwhelmingly suspicious of the designs of the official mind. One hundred years later the uniform networks of the affiliated orders dominated, central registration was normal and friendly society rank and file members were soon to give their support to Liberal welfare reforms which would effectively reduce the need for mutual benefit associations. How did this change come about ?

The trend from atomised to cellular forms of organisation can be understood as an effort to minimize the degree of risk inherent in benefit club membership. The principal gains were securing one's investment in the event of geographical mobility, and attaching oneself to a large organisation whose public profile offered a better chance of sustaining the intake of new members that was essential to a club's ongoing vitality. Considerations of risk also drove the societies towards an acceptance of central registration and the supervisory capacity of the Registrar-General, a dynamic obscured by the reluctance of individual branches to submit to bureaucracy. Legal standing, preferential investment rights and the co-ordination of actuarial data were inherently valuable and explain the gradual acquiescence in the state's regulatory role.

Twentieth century political theorists have periodically mourned the loss of the 'associative impulse' and the concomitant lessening of local democratic participation which the extension of the state brought with it.[5] It is important to recall however that not only did nineteenth century friendly societies display a tendency towards national organisation and towards state support to lessen risk, but also that despite the changes wrought by this tendency, they did *not* achieve a successful or

[5] For example, G.D.H.Cole *Guild Socialism Re-Stated* (London, 1920), quote p.115; Paul Hirst *Associative Democracy. New Forms of Economic and Social Governance* (Oxford, 1994) see p.17 for friendly societies.

universal form of social insurance. Some problems were external, such as the difficulty of calculating a viable actuarial basis for contributions and payments against a background of shifting morbidity and mortality rates. There were also inherent contradictions in the structure of this type of association. Clubs tended to form around the large nucleus of a friendship group which would then age together, rendering probable a future crisis point when demand on 'the box' intensified dramatically and the interests of younger members were pitted against the original core. An inflexible commitment to regular payment was necessary to smooth functioning, but unaccommodating to workers suffering seasonal or cyclical loss of income, militating against a fully comprehensive membership. Social solidarity was ensured by a cultural life that was too masculine and status-ridden to be truly inclusive, and was thus vulnerable to changing patterns of leisure.

It is possible to make a case for the ideology of the friendly societies establishing a favourable climate for the growth of state intervention. In contrast to those who have characterised them as bastions of self-help, individualism and the aspiration to class-conscious respectablity, the stress here has been on their collectivist sensibilities. A reading of society literature and cultural practice is suggestive not of individual independence from the state, but of a deep sense of familial and civic responsibility expressed through group solidarity. Universalism was also a basic assumption. Although the periodisation of this study has precluded a detailed examination of friendly society responses to state welfare, others have argued that the famous working-class diffidence to the Liberal reforms was *not* demonstrated in the attitude of the membership towards pensions. [6] In 1948 William Beveridge acknowledged that National Insurance '...would have been impossible without the pioneer work of the friendly societies...'. [7] In a practical sense this is self-evident, but the Bristol case-study also suggests that further research might consider anew the legacy

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[6] James H. Treble 'The Attitudes of Friendly Societies towards the Movement in Great Britain for State Pensions, 1878-1908' *International Review of Social History* 15, (1970) pp.266-299; Pat Thane 'The Working Class and State 'Welfare' In Britain, 1880-1914' *The Historical Journal*, 27, 4 (1984), pp.878-80; the latter article was a response to the Henry Pelling's seminal discussion 'The Working Class and the Origins of the Welfare State' in *Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain* (London, 1968) pp.1-18; see also Jose Harris 'Did British workers want the welfare state ? G.D.H.Cole's Survey of 1942' in Jay Winter ed. *The Working Class in Modern British History. Essays in Honour of Henry Pelling* (Cambridge, 1983).

[7] Lord Beveridge *Voluntary Action: A Report on Methods of Social Advance* (London, 1948) p.74

of the friendly society tradition by asking how exactly *did* it shape responses to collective welfare in the twentieth century ?

Rationalisation and a growing state presence were also evident in the discussion of voluntary charity, and again the limits of this type of provision were shown. Scepticism was advanced over the essentialist characterisation of philanthropy as an ahistorical and intra-class impulse to benevolence, and instead the evolution of voluntary charity was explained in its specific contexts, attending closely to the motives of the predominantly middle class donor. While the role of voluntary charity as a site of 'class formation' was not an entirely appropriate concept for Bristol, with its long-established middling elite, there was a clear shift in the early nineteenth century away from the mutualist rhetoric which characterised Georgian civic charity. Evidence for the subsequent success of voluntarists in winning the hearts and minds of the working class was highly equivocal, and balanced by indications that the benevolent were resented and deceived. Nor did working class donors ever play more than a marginal part in charitable funding: when they did, as in the case of the Hospital Funds, this was regarded as mutual insurance, not philanthropy. Again, it is important that the social exclusivity of charitable association is properly recognised. [8]

Estimates of the achievement of philanthropy are difficult to obtain, but the accent here has been in support of those historians who have noted its limitations. [9] In the case of education, while acknowledging the impact of voluntary school foundations, the role of both parental contributions and the rapidly increasing state education grants were to the fore. A comparative survey did not yield strong correlation between charity school provision and a high level of literacy, and reference was made to the inability of the voluntary system to achieve full attendance and thus erase pockets of illiteracy. In the case of medicine the pessimistic portrayal of the hospital as 'gateway to death' was rejected, and the success of specialist charities, such as eye clinics, in extending security and comfort

[8] I have in mind the influence of Prochaska's revisionism on recent work on associational democracy, see Paul Hirst op.cit., pp.212-3.

[9] A powerful attack on unsubstantiated claims that charitable giving far outweighed statutory provision has been made in Robert Humphreys *Bygone Charity - Myths and Realities* LSE Working Papers in Economic History no. 24 (1994); for another local example, see Theodore Koditschek's assertion that sums raised in crisis years by Bradford's various voluntary relief committees were 'usually less than 10 percent of the amount levied by the rates': *Class Formation and urban-industrial society. Bradford 1750-1850* (Cambridge, 1990) p.402.

to the poor was recognised. However, this was qualified firstly by the fact that career-minded doctors were as important as charitable donors to the spread of specialist hospitals, and secondly by the evidence that the appalling state of public health in mid-nineteenth century Bristol was not rectified by medical institutions, but by local government intervention.

The trend to rationalization/bureaucratization shown elsewhere was played out in the voluntary charities in the gradual diminuition of hands-on subscriber democracy. In the Infirmary for example, the annual subscriber contribution was over-shadowed by other sources of income, hence there was no necessary relationship between subscriber and patient numbers. Power increasingly accrued to the other two points of the managerial triangle, the trustees and the medical staff (although analysis of patient admissions cautioned against over-stressing the role of the latter). As Charles Booth wrote of the London Hospitals in 1902, '..It is not as charities but as public institutions that the hospitals make their appeals'. [10] By the later nineteenth century major Bristol institutions like the Muller Homes and the Children's Hospital were operating without the named subscriber.

Analysis of the finances of voluntary institutions and societies revealed that there was no sustained relationship between charity and the wider economic environment, either in terms of receipts or expenditure. Instead the idiosyncratic nature of associational finance was striking, influenced by such factors as charismatic leadership and fashion. Those which succeeded over the long term were either supported by a particular congregation (city missions), held an unshakeable place in the calendar of civic life (the Colston societies), or had transcended dependence on subscription through investment in fixed capital or securities (schools, asylums, hospitals). The transitional character of institutions from independent subscriber associations, to quasi-public bodies controlled by trustees, and ultimately to state-funding may therefore be understood in terms of the need to ensure regular predictable income.

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[10] Charles Booth *Life and Labour of the People in London Final Volume* (London, 1902) p.151; Booth argued that the co-operative basis of giving, the hospitals' teaching function, and their obligation to treat physical injuries formed the basis of their claim to being 'public institutions' and thus meriting some public funding - he had in mind the underwriting of teaching, see pp.152-3; for the forces which threatened the viability of late Victorian and Edwardian voluntary hospitals, Brian Abel-Smith *The Hospitals 1800-1948: A Study in Social Administration in England and Wales* (London, 1964) ch.10-13.

We must also recognize that voluntary charity was not a neutral terrain in civil society. Apart from a brief spell of wartime unity at the turn of the nineteenth century the identification of associations with party or sect was a constant feature. Several factors arise from this. Firstly, we should note the blurring of the boundary between the 'public' and 'private' nature of voluntarism. As with the endowed trusts, control or leadership of voluntary charities represented a degree of political power in the town, in the sense of actual patronage and influence; philanthropic participation was also perceived as a natural aspect of a career in local politics. Secondly, the multiple sectarian bases of charities meant that they were uncordinated and vulnerable to inefficiency. Local efforts to organise and rationalise were made first by the Samaritan Society from 1807, and later by the Charity Organisation Society, with a good deal of attendant publicity, but little success. [11] There was also concern (detected here in the frank reports of Unitarian domestic missionaries) about the problems of coupling poor relief with proseltyzing, such as the exploitation of the benevolent by dissemblers, and the perception of religious charity as a bribe. [12]

Finally, because voluntary charity was a vibrant part of the public sphere it provided a space - in its public meetings, its reports and its journal notices - for a fresh understanding of poverty to be forged. [13] The great social surveys of late-Victorian and Edwardian Britain may be credited with popularising the view that the broad mass of the poor were victims of environmental and economic misfortune, rather than wilfully feckless. [14] Yet this insight was understood by the sponsors of emergency charity in 1816-17, by the domestic missionaries of the 1840s and 1850s, by the conscientious vicars appealing each winter on behalf of needy parishioners and by the many nameless donors who regularly defied the 'principles of 1834' to drop casual alms into a beggar's hand. Charitable practice therefore betrays a constant creative tension between 'caritas' and utility, between religious and scientific charity - a tension which helps explain how the late-Victorian

[11] *Charity Organisation Reporter* 12/6/1872 for the meeting to promote a Bristol C.O.S.; by 1884 the local Society was 'not liberally supported' and on the verge of closure, see *Report of the Committee to Inquire into the Condition of the Bristol Poor* (Bristol, 1884) pp.213-4.

[12] See ch.10 b); also the critique of 'Religion and Charity' advanced in Charles Booth *Life and Labour of the People in London, Third Series: Religious Influences, 7, Summary* (London, 1902-4), pp.406-13, where the gulf between religious and scientific charity was deplored.

[13] See also Margaret Simey *Charity Rediscovered: A Study of Philanthropic Effort in Nineteenth-Century Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1992), first published as *Charitable Effort in Liverpool in the Nineteenth Century* (1951), pp.viii, 124, ch.x.

[14] Jose Harris *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1993) Penguin edn. 1994, pp.204-5.

philanthropic ambience could inspire both progressive politics, and sympathy for state solutions to poverty. [15]

Despite having begun with the intention of recovering the history of voluntarism from welfare state teleology, this study has concluded by indicating the tendencies within charitable and mutualist activity which led towards state intervention in social policy. It has pointed to a growing sense of the public interest superseding the private and the independent, and has drawn out those trends towards rationalisation which were stirred by the efforts of an urban-industrial society to overcome the limitations of the voluntary sector. As such it cautions social and political theorists against idealising the charitable and associational past.

[15] I refer to what Gareth Stedman Jones has characterised as 'a more or less secularised form of Christian evangelical impulses deriving from the late nineteenth century', see his 'Why is the Labour Party in a mess ?', in *Languages of Class Studies in English Working Class History 1832-1982* (Cambridge, 1983) p.248; see also Sally Alexander's 'Introduction' to Maud Pember Reeves *Round About a Pound a Week* (1913) edn. 1979, pp.xi-xii; Albert Fried and Richard M.Elman ed. *Charles Booth's London* (1969) p.20.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Notes on statistics for endowed charities in Chapter3:

In addition to the general comments in the text on the reliability of the information which the various Charity Commissioners actually received, attention needs to be drawn to problems in handling the data to arrive at the statistical presentation.

a) Dating

In some cases the commissioners were unable to date the establishment of the trust, and it has been impossible to find a date through cross-referencing the reports, or to infer an approximate date from clues such as names of trustees or particular targets mentioned in a dated trust. In the Brougham report there 14 such undated entries; most were for small amounts, though three were over £ 2-0s-0d: one at £ 18-7s-6d, one at £ 5-0s-0d, one at £ 6-0s-0d. Together the undated entries total £ 43-1s-6d, and this could distort, in a minor way, some of the figures and the conclusions drawn, should they, by chance, all fall in the same decade, or two decades. Of course, this is highly improbable, given that the enquiry listed charities over a three hundred year timespan, the earliest being 1492 (Foster's Almshouse). Also, the reason for charities being entered undated is presumably because their founding records were lost, and it would be a likely assumption that this is because their inception was before the 1660 starting point used in my collation.

b) Valuation

There are two problems here. Should annual income be chosen as the indicator of value, or the capital sum donated, and how should adjustment be introduced to account for price fluctuations over the period ? Income has been chosen in preference to the capital sum bequeathed since a number of gifts took the form of property, generating an annual rent for the charity, hence no capital value is recorded. This is not an ideal approach, but the alternative, estimating capital values from descriptions such as 'two houses', is clearly not viable. One drawback of basing the table on income rather than capital values is that deliberately interest-free loan monies are lost; during the period covered these amount to the Quaker loan fund in the

1730's (£ 100), and the fund spread between four parishes by Orchard in the 1800's (£ 334). I have been content to omit these on the grounds that they will show up in the volume tables, but if, as a theoretical exercise an interest rate of 5% is posited for them, this would add £ 5-0s-0d to the 1730's and £ 16-18s-0d to the 1800's. The first would not distort the conclusions drawn for the 1730's and the second would only accentuate the argument for a revival of beneficence in the early nineteenth century. Finally, annual income calculated this way represents the nearest possible indicator of the actual amounts at the disposal of the spending authorities.

All property endowments are seen in terms of 1822 rental values, rather than the actual rentals in the decade of the gift. All trust income from the two later Enquiries has been adjusted to 1822 values, using the Rousseaux Overall Price Index. In *Figure 3.3*, where the overall value of endowments to the poor is contrasted with the poor rates and Infirmary income, all figures are again adjusted to 1820s values, by means of the Schumpeter-Gilboy Consumer Goods, and the Rousseaux Overall Price Indices. The 1820s are the base decade because this was when the Brougham Commission reported for Bristol, and therefore the first point at which there is an accurate record of charity income.

c) Volume

In order to catch the full range of targets, gifts divided by the testator between several specified objectives have been treated throughout as distinct endowments. This has meant that the number of trusts displayed in *Figure 3.1* and *Table 3.1* slightly exceeds the number of actual donors.

Appendix 2

Notes on 'occupations' in Tables 4.1, 4.2 a)

Classification of occupation at such a distance is difficult, and anyway the nature of nineteenth century economic activity in Bristol often blurred distinctions between foreign merchant, manufacturer, wholesaler and financier. The most awkward classification is that of 'merchant', where contemporary description does not accord with modern taxonomy. For example George Thomas, William Tothill, James Cunningham and Thomas Powell all described themselves as merchants, though the first was a wholesale grocer, the second a cement and plaster of paris manufacturer, and the other two foreign traders, of West India goods and tobacco respectively. The distinction between commerce and manufacture also blurs in the case of Fripp and Co., which in addition to soap manufacture was also an importer of oil. Nor can the bald descriptions in trade directories convey the status or size of a firm: Samuel Brown, who described himself as a tanner, was presumably proprieter of a large scale business judging by the value of his estate. It seems likely that several members, such as Fripp, Castle and Bengough, were not actually working at the time of trusteeship, though in this case I have chosen to count them under the last recorded occupation. As far as possible I have grouped individuals within what appears to be the major occupation over time, under the headings of 'merchant' where foreign trade is suggested, 'wholesale' where commerce is within the local or national market, and manufacture and the professions accordingly.

Appendix 3

Friendly Society expenditure, early 1870s

The figure is reached by finding the average annual number of weekly sickness payments and death benefits paid by Bristol friendly societies, according to the *Abstract of the Quinquennial Returns of Sickness and Mortality experienced by Friendly Societies between ... 1870-1875*, PP 1880 lxviii, pp.698-701. These were, 190 weeks sick pay and 1.6 members dead on average per society. Totals were then calculated according to the payment rates and numbers of societies listed in PP 1874 xxiii pt.2, *Friendly Societies Commission: - Appendix to Sir G.Young's Report*, pp.51-4. The sickness and death payment rates used were: Odd Fellows: 11s.6d, £ 15; Foresters: 13s, £ 12; Shepherds: 11s, £ 6; local societies, smaller orders: 8s, 10s, and the number of societies in each category were 17, 55, 47 and 56 respectively. This estimate is likely to be a minimum, as it does not include either the lying-in or death of members' wives, which also occasioned the payment of benefit. Also, Young's list only counts 12 unregistered societies, which may well be far too few. Estimates of the numbers unregistered vary, but the 1874 Royal Commission guessed there was as many members registered as unregistered; Dot Jones uses a multiplier of 1.5 in her calculations, which assumes that one-third of societies did not register. [1]

[1] Dot Jones 'Did Friendly Societies Matter ? A Study of Friendly Societies in Glamorgan, 1794-1910' *The Welsh History Review*, 324, (1985).

Appendix 4

Sample of Bristol Friendly Societies

The table shows a sample of the 316 friendly societies on which the conclusions in Chapter 6 were based. The sources are the rule books and articles of friendly societies preserved in the Bristol Quarter Sessions records, and in the Public Record Office, FS1 and FS2, Gloucestershire, though only a fraction of these are preserved, given the number of societies registered. Information shown includes:

Name.

Ref:	Reference number in PRO (ie. that given by the Registrar-General).
Founded; Registered; Dissolved:	Dates of foundation and registration, and in a few cases, dissolution.
Meeting Places:	Predominantly inns.
Feast:	Monthly sum from subscription spent on beer or put towards feast (annual sum: Subscribers Annuitant, Friendly Union).
Max. no.:	Maximum number of members.
Age:	Maximum and/or minimum ages of members.
Min. earn:	Minimum earnings permitted for entry.
Female:	Women's club
Entry:	Sum payable on entrance.
Subscription:	Monthly / Annual / Quarterly subscription.
Funeral:	Funeral levy paid by members.
Illness:	Weekly / Daily sum paid in the event of illness.
Death:	Lump sum paid at death, or annuities paid by annuitant societies.
Lying-In:	Lump sum paid on birth of child.

Table 64:1 Sample of Bristol Friendly Societies

Name	Ref	Founded	Registered	Dissolved	Meeting Place	Feast	Max. no.	Age	Min. earn.	Female	Entry	Subscriptn	Funeral	Illness	Death	Lying-in
Friendly Benefit Soc of all trades		1814			Castle & Ball	3d						1s9d			15s	
Bristol Annuitant		1787			Whute Hart							£2-8s				
Philanthropic Soc		1803	1812		Mulberry Tree		150	<40			42s-176s	£4 pa			£12-£24 an	
Subscribers Annuitant Soc.	322	1832	1835		Whute Lion/ Athenaeum	8s	150	>40			3-6 gun	£4 pa				
Provident Annuitant Soc.	577	1796	1823		Bush Tavern				house*		n	£5 pa			£10-£30 an	
Female Benefit Young Union Soc.	584	1804	1844	1855	Ship Inn	2d		>45		f	1s	10d		6s 3d	8s	12s
Colston Union Soc. of Females	567	1843	1843	1890	Ship Tavern	2d		>45		f	1s6d	1s		3s6d w	10s	
Odd Sisters Pride of England lodge	616	1852	1852		Pineapple Inn	2d		15-40		f		1s		6s 6d	8s	10s
Pious Colstons Female Benefit Soc.	587	1840	1840	1863	Star Inn		120	>45		f		1s	2s	7s w	15s	12s
1st Female Protestant Provident Soc.		1794					160	16-40		f	5s 6d	1s 1d	1s	7s6dw	8s	15s
Bristol Cordwainers United Knott Soc.		1810			Crown & Cushion							1s 6d		5s-10s	£12-£6	
British Society		1800			Giants Castle	3d	100	<35			6s	1s 6d	1s6d	10s 6d	6s	21s
United Britons Benfit Soc.		1818	1845		The Star	3d	121	<43	15s+			1s 6d	1s6d	10s w	£5-£12	21s
Friendly Union Soc.		1810			Plume of Feathers						2s 6d	1s	2s		£8-£4	
Royal Oak Soc.		1805			Cups & Salmon		101	>45		f		1s	1s	7s	10s	
Young Union Soc. of Cordwainers	589	1770	1838		Cock&Bottle	3d	71		9s		2s	1s		8s	10s	
Associated Brethren Benefit Soc.		1816			The Crown	3d					12s-24s	1s-2s	2s	10s-£1w	10s	
Loyal Victoria Soc. of Females	548	1844	1844		Spring Garden			>45		f	9d	1s2d		6s w	10s	
Caroline Union Soc.	558	1805	1837		Full Moon Inn	3d	150	>35	12s+			1s3d	2s	10s w	15s	21s
Friendly Association		1782			The Bell	3d					varies	1s3d	1s	8s	8s	
Royal Regent Soc.		1816			Rising Sun	3d	101		14s		2s 6d	1s3d		9s 4.5d	10s	£2
Bristol Clothiers, Cutters&Assts.	686	1857	1858	1860	White Hart Inn						7s	1s4d		10s	£2 10s	
Bristol Annual Total Abstinence Benefit S	593	1843	1843		Temperance Coffee Rooms				14s+			1s6d	2s			
Duke of York Royal United Benefit Soc.	275	1827	1836		Lebeck Inn	3d	81	18-35	10s		5s	1s6d	1s2d	1s4d pd	7s	
Friendly Society of Cabinet Makers		1812										1s6d		10s	15s	
Good Samaritan Benefit Soc.	315	1815	1841		Castle &Ball Inn			>35	12s+			1s6d		10s-5s	14s	21s
Loyal Richard Reynolds Annual Benefit S	553	1823	1844		Cat&Wheel	3d	150		14s		5s-7s6d	1s6d		10s w	12s	21s
Primitive Methodist Local Preachers	653	1856	1856		Primitive Methodist Chapel			18-45			9s-£2	1s6d	3d	9s-6s	9s	
Hibernian Benefit Soc	559	1841	1841		Steam Packet	3d	150	18-45	15s+ w		1s6d-10s6d	1s 6d		10s pw	£6-£15	£1
Royal Victoria Benefit Soc.	313	1845	1845		Cock&Bottle	3d		>40			2s6d-5s	1s9d		10s w	12s	21s
United Royal Oak Benefit Soc.	314	1805	1845		Cock &Bottle	3d		>35	12s+		2s6d-5s	1s9d		5s w	9s	21s
General Annuitant Soc.	594	1805	1840	1869	White Lion Inn			<40			10s-£25	28s-£7a			£10-£15an	
Ancient Britons Annual Benefit Soc.	304	1828	1830		Three Crowns Inn		140	>35	14s		17s	2s		9s w	12s	
Liberal Annual Friendly Benefit Soc.	640	1856	1856		Bath Barge Inn	3d		>34			5s6d	2s		8s	10s	10s6d
Royal Friendship Union Friendly Soc.	555	1846	1846		Full Moon Inn							2s				
Benefit Soc. of all trades		1795	1827		Trout Tavern		any	<30	18s w		21s	2s	4s	12s w	£20-£10	
Victoria Annual Benefit Soc.	428	1838	1847		Golden Heart Inn		100					2s	1s6d	9s	10s	
Oddfellows Loyal Mariners Hope Lodge	619	1844	1852		Carpenters Arms			18-35			12s-£4 10	2s2d		12s w	12s	
Friendly Union Soc.	581	1717			Plume of Feathers	1s6d pa		<36	14s+		1s6d-21s	3s		9s4 5d pw		
Duke of Wellington Annual Benefit Soc.		1816			Jolly Meter	3d	80	<40	21s w		5s-£1	3s		11s-8s	15s	
Royal Bristol Annual Benefit Society		1804			Golden Lion	6d	75	>45	25s		6s-21s	4s	2s	12sw	20s	
Loyal Nelsons New Annual Benefit Soc.	318	1806	1834		Ship &Post Office	6d		<35	20s+			4s	2s	12s-10s	£15-£20	
Society of women St Mary Redcliffe		1795			Girls Charity School	n		14-45		f	4s-5s	6s5d	1s	5s-1s		10s6d
Society of Women St Augustine		1800			Girls Charity School	n		14-45		f	4s-5s	6s5d	1s	5s-1s		10s6d
Bristol Equitable Soc.		1816			Cross Keys		2200	18-45			5s-10s	7d q			50s	
Alliance Division Sons of Temperance	921	1867	1867		Freemans Coffee House											
Bristol Benevolent Union Soc.	592	1839	1842		Old Globe Inn		101	18-35	16s+							
Bristol Independent Order of Rechabites	566	1844	1844		Tailors Court			16-45						>15sw	20s	
Bristol Society of all trades	571	1795	1839		Cock & Bottle			>35	18s							

* = householder

Appendix 5

Friendly Society Sickness Returns 1845-75

Hard evidence of trends in benefit spending of the Bristol clubs discussed in Chapter 6 can be gleaned from the *Abstract of the Quinquennial Returns of Sickness and Mortality Experienced by Friendly Societies Between 1855 and 1875*, the first far-ranging and systematic attempt by government to guage sickness levels; the earlier *Abstract of Returns Respecting Friendly Societies in England and Wales, During Five Years Ending 1850* is of less use since it relied on a small sample of un-named clubs. In these sources the number of members in each club is recorded, along with the amount of weeks' sick pay laid out over the five year period: *Tables 6A.2a)* and *6A.2b)* present some of this information. *Table 6A.2a)* is an index of comparative rates of sickness spending of 27 branches of Foresters and Odd Fellows and two local societies for each of the quinquennial periods. The index is arrived at by taking the total number of members at its highest point over the five years, multiplying this by 260 to find the total number of possible weeks over which sick benefit might have been paid, and then rendering the actual amount paid as a percentage of this total. In addition the percentages are averaged by court/lodge and by order, while average membership level over the period and date of foundation is also included. In order to guage variation over the sequence the clubs chosen were those which made at least three quinquennial returns, and the seven un-named societies from the 1850 abstract have also been added for good measure. *Table 6A.2b)* is a more straightforward statement of membership levels using the same sample, though the figures represent the highest possible number of members for each five-year period, not the average.

As noted in Chapter 6 f) *Table 6A.2 a)* suggests that the longer a branch lasted the higher its spending on sickness was likely to be. The implication was that the nucleus of membership continued to be formed around a generational cohort which aged together. The other possible determinant was the changing pattern of sickness emphasized in the research of James Riley. Riley suggests that from around 1850 a new morbidity trend towards increased rates of recovery began to emerge; the result was that '...the quantity of sickness, especially protracted sickness, increased at every age'. [1]

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1 James C.Riley *Sickness, Recovery and Death: A History and Forecast of Ill Health* (London, 1989), p.159.

The average branch membership figures shown in *Table 6A.2 b)* reveal the expected growth of the Foresters with a commensurate decline of local societies. In contrast Odd Fellowship lodge size suffered a decline in the 1860s, from which it had recovered by 1875, and although the post-1860 averages are depressed by of the appearance of fairly small clubs like Blaize Castle and Avon Lodge, this suggests that the I.O.O.F.M.U. was not so attractive to new members as the Foresters. The depression of the late-1860s may have been a factor here, with the higher costs of Odd Fellowship pushing potential members to a more down-market club. This relative failure might also explain the trend shown in *Table 6A.2a)* of Odd Fellow spending continuing to rise while the Foresters restrained theirs' 1871-5, since a more bouyant intake of younger and fitter members would have allowed the Foresters to pay out less.

Table 6A.2a) Index of comparative rates of sickness, Bristol Friendly Societies

Friendly Society Sickness Returns, 1845-1875: comparative sickness benefit expenditure

Foresters:

Court:	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*average:*	*members:*	*founded:*
Thomas Chatterton	1.5	2.7	3.9	3.7	2.9	195	1849
Robin Hood's Retreat	2.7	3.9	3.9	3	3.4	121	1845
Marquis of Worcester	1	1.7	2	2.2	1.7	392	1845
City of Bristol	1.9	2.2	2.2	3.3	2.4	199	1841
Edward Colston	2.5	3.3	5.1	4.8	3.9	184	1845
Perseverance	1.6	2.8	3.4	3.8	2.9	171	1844
Duke of Beaufort	1.8	2.7	2.7	2.4	2.4	112	1845
Philanthropic	1	2.9	3.2	5	3	124	1841
Vale of Berkeley	0.6	2.4	2.2	1.7	1.7	84	1845
Alfred the Great	1.8	3.4	3.3	2	2.6	72	1844
Samson	1.4	1.8	2.4	2.1	1.9	174	1850
Prince of Wales	1.6	1.1	2.1	2.7	1.9	97	1844
Highland Chief		1.3	2	2.1	1.8	203	1856
Maid Marian		1.8	2.1	1.8	1.9	139	1857
Lady Christabel		0.6	1.5	1	1	83	1861
Banks of the Froom		0.8	2.7	1.8	1.7	138	1859
average total:	1.6	2.2	2.8	2.7	2.3		

Oddfellows:

Lodge:	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*average:*	*members:*	*founded:*
Great Western	1	2.7	3.3	3.3	2.6	278	1838
True Friendship	1.3	2.6	3	3.2	2.5	137	1842
Good Intent	2.2	3.1	4	5	3.6	230	1841
Friendly Mechanics	1.3	1.8	2.7	2.6	2.1	173	1839
Benevolent	1.9	2.5	3.1	3.2	2.7	210	1842
City of Bristol	2.2	2.9	3.5	3.9	3.1	126	1842
St Andrews	3.3	2.6	3.6	3.6	3.3	118	1843
Humanity	2.4	2.6	2.5	5.8	3.3	156	1840
Blaize Castle		0.8	1.4	1.6	1.3	107	1859
Widow's Hope		2	3	3.5	2.8	194	1841
Avon Lodge		0.5	1.3	0.8	0.9	63	1860
average total:	1.9	2.2	2.9	3.3	2.6		

Local societies:	*1850*	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*average:*	*members:*	*founded:*
unnamed:1	3.3						73	1819
" 2	3.2						43	1831
" 3	1.2						63	1803
" 4	5						278	1813
" 5	3.5						138	1823
" 6	3.2						140	1795
" 7	1						24	1841
New Years United		1.5	0.7	1.9	2.4	1.6	155	1829
Redland Union		1.6	4.8	4.5	4.2	3.8	63	1831
average total:	2.9	1.5	2.7	3.2	3.3	2.7		

Table 6A.2b) Membership levels, Bristol Friendly Societies

Friendly Society Sickness Returns, 1855-1875: membership trends

Foresters:

Court:	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*average:*
Thomas Chatterton	172	208	204	196	195
Robin Hood's Retreat	120	117	117	132	121
Marquis of Worcester	351	366	429	424	392
City of Bristol	201	193	204	199	199
Edward Colston	172	175	173	216	184
Perseverance	130	167	177	209	171
Duke of Beaufort	104	112	111	121	112
Philanthropic	120	131	126	121	124
Vale of Berkeley	86	99	70	83	84
Alfred the Great	70	77	69	72	72
Samson	130	165	191	211	174
Prince of Wales	85	89	104	111	97
Highland Chief		179	193	238	203
Maid Marian		105	136	175	139
Lady Christabel		62	68	118	83
Banks of the Froom		124	135	154	138
average total:	145.1	148.1	156.7	173.8	

Oddfellows:

Lodge:	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*average:*
Great Western	292	265	290	267	278
True Friendship	130	129	129	161	137
Good Intent	248	255	211	207	230
Friendly Mechanics	148	165	179	200	173
Benevolent	215	217	213	197	210
City of Bristol	106	106	130	161	126
St Andrews	84	131	129	128	118
Humanity	142	158	156	167	156
Blaize Castle		106	115	101	107
Widow's Hope		179	184	218	194
Avon Lodge		58	58	73	63
average total:	170.6	160.8	163.1	170.9	

Local societies:

New Years United	97	207	190	125	155
Redland Union	87	77	53	34	63
average total:	92	142	121.5	79.5	

Appendix 6

Notes on sources for Voluntary Charity

The historian of associational life in the nineteenth century is more fortunate than those researching earlier periods in that the increasing availability and detail in newspapers and trade directories make it possible to trace the development of voluntarism with a higher degree of accuracy. It becomes viable to track 'first sightings' of new societies, and be confident that foundation can be ascribed at least to a particular decade, if not always the precise year. The survey on which Chapter 8 is based draws on a dataset of 372 voluntary societies or institutions founded before 1900, derived from information contained in Matthews's Bristol Directory and Kelly's Directory, from searches of the local press, and surviving reports and subscription lists. Although in many cases the actual date of foundation was given in the directories, this was not always so, and, it being impractical to check the newspaper sources for every single year of the century, sample years were chosen and the objective of tying each association to the first decade of its life was adopted.

Two considerations regarding the newspaper search should be noted. Firstly, that the choice of sample years was made by selecting 'trough' years in the British trade cycle, as identified by Rostow, on the assumption that periods of heightened need were likely to witness both new formations and established charities at their most active. [1] In retrospect, as the argument in Chapter 9 suggests, this assumption was probably ill-founded. Secondly, it is possible that reliance on single years may have unduly coloured some of the opinions arising from qualitative evidence. For example the discussion in Chapter 10c) of the role of the missions in shaping British attitudes to the foreign 'other' was partly influenced by the choice of 1858 as a sample year, when the 'Indian Mutiny' had forced these matters to the centre of public discourse.

The methodology employed with the newspapers was to read each edition for the year, noting both prior notices and reports of the meetings or other activities of voluntary associations or institutional subscribers. These provided the basic information for a dataset of the charities, showing name, date of foundation, prime function, meeting place, meeting day and time, names

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1 W.W.Rostow 'Cycles in the British Economy: 1790-1914' in Derek Aldcroft and Peter Fearon ed. *British Economic Fluctuations, 1790-1939* (London, 1972) p.77.

of key individuals (Patron, President, Treasurer, Secretaries), place of subscription collection and name of collector, and if relevant, details of the ladies committee and time and place of sermon. This was then supplemented by the information in the directories, and the surviving annual reports.

A few points must be made about the range of institutions studied and the nature of the sources used, to establish both the scope of the dataset and its limitations. Firstly, how has voluntarism been defined ? A great many of the entries are made up of institutions providing health care, shelter, education or a more ambiguous goal such as the reform of delinquents, which, although they might have employed waged staff, were run by a committee whose attendance at meetings and work for the institution was unpaid. In addition societies which met at least once a year to raise funds for some charitable purpose have been included, again where management was in the hands of unpaid enthusiasts. There is a potential grey area here, where the attendance, say, of clergymen in societies for church building or missionary work may in fact have been seen as part of the job rather than genuinely voluntary. For the purposes of the dataset their freedom of action will be assumed; the relationship between religious obligation and philanthropic voluntarism was discussed in Chapter 10.

In the introduction to the thesis a rationale was set out for a broad interpretation of philanthropy, and this is the criterion used to select the organisations studied here. Health, education and poor relief play a large part, but so do the evangelising and missionary activities of the churches. In terms of the personnel involved and the relationship between their efforts and the social problems they sought to address it makes little sense to segregate them from the rest. To contemporaries the provision of the Bible in the home of the poor could be at least as important as the supply of more material assistance in the struggle '..to eradicate the very spring and first principles of vice' and achieve 'moral and spiritual regeneration'. [2] A few overtly political societies have also been included on the same principles, such as those concerned with anti-slavery and peace. [3] This is not to suggest that party politics and charity were otherwise

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2 BRL 9351 *Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society Minutes of 8th. Annual General Meeting, 1818.*

3 In trade directories, on the public platform and in their organisation and methods, they were identified with the voluntary charities. Also, activists in these groups were also prominent in other philanthropic areas because they provided a focus for the same emotional and ideological concerns: see Clare Midgley 'Anti-Slavery and Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Britain' *Gender and History* Vol. 5 No. 3 (1993) pp.346, 351-2; but see also David Owen op. cit., p.129 for his concern over anti-slavery and '..the boundary between religious and politico-social reform'

unrelated - the account of the endowed charities has already made the connection explicit, and more was said in Chapter 10 of the importance to political elites of participation in voluntary charities.

It may seem perverse that the broad definition of philanthropy adopted here does not encompass institutions for cultural improvement or leisure provision. Cultural institutions such as the Library, and the Literary and Philosophical Society helped create the climate of social understanding in which philanthropy took place: Charity Trustee Charles Bowles Fripp's leadership of the Bristol Statistical Society, which surveyed poverty and education in the city is a case in point. The reason for their exclusion is pragmatic as a much as conceptual - good studies of these already exist and even though the periodization is not quite the same it would be pointless to duplicate effort. [4]

It should not be imagined that this approach to voluntarism is in any way comprehensive, since by focusing on institutions with some degree of permanence it necessarily fails to catch the short-term, individual collections which were such an important form of aid. Sometimes these could be generated by a particular congregation identifying an issue which concerned them, such as the Society of Friends' collections to relieve the hunger of '..a large portion of the poor of the Western Coast of Ireland' in 1831, or to aid the unemployed during the cotton famine of 1862. [5] Alternatively, they could be pitched at a wider constituency through a newspaper campaign to raise subscriptions to tackle the exigiencies of a particular disaster which pricked the popular conscience. International events like the 'Conflagration of Moscow' in 1814 or shipping tragedies like the loss of the *Killarney* in 1838 are examples. [6] Sometimes a case of an individual in 'Extreme Distress' might be put to the public by the newspapers, such as that of the widow of Mr Dudman, a painter who had committed suicide in 1803 leaving her with 3 children to support: interested parties could come to her aid by leaving donations either with the printer or at two local coffee shops. [7] Throughout the period it was also common for appeals to be

4 For a discussion of these issues, see Michael E.Rose 'Culture, Philanthropy and the Manchester Middle Classes' in A.J.Kidd and K.W.Roberts ed. *City, Class and Culture* (Manchester 1985); the existing Bristol studies are M.Neve 'Natural Philosophy, Medicine and the Culture of Science in Provioncial England: the Cases of Bristol and Bath 1790-1850 and Bath 1750-1820' PhD, University College London (1984), idem. 'Science in a commercial city: Bristol 1820-60' Ian Inkster and Jack Morrell ed. *Metropolis and Province: Science in British Culture, 1780-1850* (London, 1983) and H.E.Meller *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914* (London, 1976).

5 BRO SF/A1/24: 5/7/1831, SF/A1/28: 4/11/1862.

6 *FFBJ* 19/2/1814, 26/2/1814; 10/2/1838.

7 *FFBJ* 10/9/1803.

made around Christmas to raise money '..on behalf of the poor borne down by want and the inclemencies of the season.' At the start of the century these were sponsored by general committees, or, in the case of the winter of 1816-17 by the Corporation itself, and although the city-wide approach soon gave way it remained common for vicars to appeal in the press on behalf of their parishioners. [8]

Beyond noting anecdotal examples which testify to the persistence of the 'one-off' appeal it is not really possible to integrate such spontaneous action into a total quantification of voluntary effort. Even if a trawl through every single newspaper of the period were feasible it would not necessarily yield important information, such as total sum raised, nor would it catch collections made by individual congregations, which have simply disappeared from the record. Perhaps the greatest concern in this respect is that much of the voluntary effort of the working class is absent from the account. In 1826 for example, the *Bristol Mirror* reported that the local journeymen printers had sent off part of their weekly wages for the '..relief of such of their brethren in the Metropolis as may have been deprived of employment by the present stagnation of the trade.' [9] Later in the century, when the affiliated orders came to dominate the friendly society world it was common for clubs to have a fund that could be dipped into for the relief of members temporarily in need. [10] It may be that trade solidarity and the neighbourly 'whip-round' deserve some consideration in this respect too, but how can they be traced ?

The same criticism also proceeds from the choice of sources used since both were pitched to the higher end of the social scale. Directories have long been recognised as dangerous for the selectivity of their entries, although the point has been made most tellingly in relation to business listings and the problem becomes less acute from the mid-century. [11] As far as voluntarism is concerned, the town's image could certainly be boosted with listings that showed how the '..People of Bristol have long been pre-eminent in establishing and supporting

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8 *FFBJ* 26/1/1811; M.Gorsky 'Experiments in Poor Relief' op. cit.; *Bristol Mercury* 18/12/1858 for appeals by incumbents of Temple St. James, Bedminster and St George.

9 *Bristol Mirror* 29/7/1826.

10 PRO FS1 Gloucestershire 716; Minute Book of Court City of Bristol, A.O.F. November 1847.

11 Jane E. Norton *Guide to the National and Provincial Directories of England and Wales, excluding London, published before 1856* (1950); P.J.Corfield and Serena Kelly '"Giving directions to the town": the early town directories' *Urban History Yearbook* (1984); Gareth Shaw 'The content and reliability of nineteenth-century trade directories.' *The Local Historian* (1978) vol.13 No 4; John R.Walton 'Trades and professions in late 18th-century England: assessing the evidence of directories' *The Local Historian* (1987) Vol 17 No 6; for the problems of using the eighteenth century Bristol directories, see E.Baigent 'Bristol society in the later eighteenth century with special reference to the handling by computer of fragmentary historical sources' unpublished University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis (1985).

Charitable Institutions..', yet this was no guarantee of comprehensiveness. [12] Matthews's 1794 Directory referred to fifteen voluntary schools and an unspecified number of Sunday schools, the Infirmary, the Dispensary, the Asylums for the blind and the orphan girls, and a further nine societies with various purposes; by contrast the 1801 directory listed only the Infirmary, Dispensary, Blind Asylum and Hotwells Pneumatic Institution. Omissions can be offset through cross-referencing with newspapers. These played an important part in the annual round of voluntary charity activity since they provided the local forum for the advertisement of annual, quarterly or extraordinary meetings, the printing of reports and appeals, and often the basis for several columns of news which recounted the speeches and resolutions made in some detail.

Corroboration by the two sources does not rule out all problems since both newspapers and directories were deliberately selective and pitched at a readership of better-off citizens. The relative invisibility of friendly society activity is telling proof of this, despite the fact that the benefit club was the most pervasive associational form in Bristol society. It is the voluntary effort of the middle class that is going to be caught in the methodological net used here. Reliance on these two main sources also raises the question of novelty. Was the apparent 'take-off' of society formations from around the 1790s a real phenomenon, or, as Jonathan Barry has argued, largely an illusion fostered by their heightened visibility in the printed record ? [13] My approach in Section III is to balance this concern by treating the period c.1790-1820 as a cyclical upsurge of voluntary effort, with quite distinctive features, rather than as a major disjuncture.

Any attempt to quantify voluntary effort immediately confronts the difficulty of developing a viable taxonomy. It is not simply that motive and outcome might be different - for example, the urge to establish adult schools in the second decade of the century was driven by the desire to teach working people to read the Bible, and thus raise the level of moral awareness. [14] Should these be classified as educational, evangelising or reforming charities ? The problem is compounded by the existence of charities which performed more than one function, such as the

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12 Trade Directory 1831 p.277.

13 Jonathan Barry 'Review Article: The Making of the Middle Class?' *Past and Present* no.145, (1995) pp. 199-200; idem 'Bourgeois Collectivism ? Urban Association and the Middling Sort' in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks ed. *The Middling Sort of People. Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (London, 1994), pp.92-3.

14 Thomas Pole *A History of the Origin and Progress of Adult Schools* (1816) p.19.

domestic missions: the Unitarian women's 'Working and Visiting Society' aimed to create solidarity between rich and poor members of their congregation, to ensure that children attended Sunday School, to dispense cheap or free clothing, give advice, and sometimes money doles and Dispensary tickets. Likewise the various female 'penitentiary' charities performed a housing function in providing a refuge for 'fallen women', but also a medical one, in that they aided single mothers in childbirth, and again a moral one, in seeking to redeem prostitutes. Any taxonomy adopted to categorise voluntary activity is therefore bound to be crude and imprecise, and perhaps over-determined by present-day notions.

Table 8A.1 Formations of voluntary societies/institutions in Bristol 1800-1899.

	poverty	education	health	church	temperance	reform	housing	campaign	total
1800s	1	3	3	1			2		10
1810s	5	12	5	8			1		31
1820s	5	17	3	13				2	40
1830s	3	19	8	3	3	2			38
1840s	8	16	3	6		1	1	7	42
1850s	2	24	5	2	1	4	3		44
1860s	3	16	5	5	1	4	3	2	39
1870s	7	20	4	8	1	1	7	2	50
1880s	4	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	19
1890s	3	1	4	4	2	7	3	1	25
Total	41	132	44	52	10	25	18	17	338

Source: Matthews & Kelly's Bristol Trade Directories, various dates; local press, various dates; miscellaneous sources of the groups themselves, see bibliography.

Table 8A.1 offers a general overview of development during the century. Classification is based on what appears to be the principal objective. 'Poverty' includes the visiting charities which supplied doles of different kinds to the poor, those which tackled specified target groups like beggars or the respectable poor, and those which initiated particular approaches to dealing with pauperism, such as facilitating emigration or providence. 'Education' refers mainly to institutions: adult, infant, day, and Sunday schools. 'Health' embraces hospitals, the dispensary movement, Dorcas societies, and those institutions geared to a particular need such as deafness, blindness or sick children. 'Church' consists of those organisations that evangelised at home, promoted the interest of a particular church, or supported missions abroad. 'Temperance' is a

self-evident category, distinguished from other 'Reform' efforts, such as those aimed at saving prostitutes or prisoners, or the more general efforts to 'civilise' the poor. 'Housing' is applied where it seems that the main objective is to provide an institutional residence in which reform might occur. 'Campaign' refers to groups on the margins of charity, but is included because issues like anti-slavery, peace and animal welfare appear to have been conceived of as philanthropic rather than narrowly political.

The largest single category in *Table 8A.1* is made up of schools, reflecting the central position of education in the philanthropic project. As the PMFS put it: '..when the rising sun of knowledge shall have attained its meridian splendour, .. ignorance, credulity and vice shall vanish like the morning mist before its beams.' [15] *Table 8A.2* sets out the pattern of growth that emerges if the trade directory evidence is used to disaggregate the voluntary contribution into its component parts; columns 1-8 divide by type of school while column 9 includes charities set up exclusively to raise funds for education.

Table 8A.2 Bristol's educational charities, 1800-1900, by type.

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*
	Sunday	Infant	Day		D/I/S*	Ragged	Adult	Evening	Seminary
Funding									
1800s	2						1		
1810s	2	1	8			1			
1820s	2	3	4	2	1	2			3
1830s	1	8	6	3	1				
1840s			11	1	2			1	1
1850s		3	9	4	5	3			
1860s	1	2	10	1	2				
1870s		5	12		3				
1880s		2	1						
1890s			1						

* D/I/S = *institutions offering combinations of day, infant and Sunday schooling*

The trends of change here are fairly well established, with the appearance of the Sunday, Evening and Adult school movements at the start of the period, opening the way for a sectarian-driven growth of charity day and infant schools that dominated the mid-century, while

[15] *FFBJ* 24/12/1814.

reformatories and ragged schools featured strongly between the 1840s to 1870s. [16] The flurry of activity in the wake of Forster's Education Act in fact signalled an end to new charity establishments, as the school boards took over. These figures do not fully show the extent of Sunday and Adult school formations, either because such institutions were simply not known to directory compilers, or because they are subsumed under schools which are listed as day or infant. [17] Those which combined a day, infant and Sunday school function (Column 4) are almost certainly understated for the same reason.

Three other sources exist which can refine the picture set out above, an 1841 survey conducted by the Bristol Statistical Society, the 1851 Education Census and a council survey undertaken in 1870; these are shown in *Table 8A.3.*

Table 8A. 3 The Structure of Education in Bristol, 1841, 1851.

Type of school:	*1841* schools	pupils	*1851* schools	pupils	*1870* schools	pupils
Private	446	7,487	269	6,345	87	4,658
Endowed	12	571	13	1,373	{111	18,628
Voluntary	52	6,362	64	10,508	{	
Sunday	86	11,684	91	14,128		

Source: 'Statistics of Education in Bristol' *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* vol. IV, (1841); 1851 Education Census, PP 1852-3, vol.xc; *Western Daily Press* 14/12/1870.

The drastic decline of private education reflects the disappearance of private working class day schooling - the 'lost elementary schools of Victorian England'. [18] Charity schooling's simultaneous triumph is modified somewhat by the consideration that in most a parental

16 General surveys include Michael Sanderson *Education, Economic Change and Society in England 1780-1870* (London 1983); Mary Sturt *The Education of the People* (London 1967); Brian Simon *Studies in the History of Education 1780-1870* (London 1960); Neil J.Smelser *Social Paralysis and Social Change: British working-class education in the nineteenth century* (Oxford 1991).

17 Table 2 lists only the Adult School Society (Society for teaching the Adult Poor to read the Holy Scriptures) in the 1810s, while the Society itself claimed that 55 schools were operational in 1816, attended by 732 men and 842 women, with a further four under the aegis of the Congregational chapels: see Thomas Pole op. cit., p.22.

18 Philip W. Gardner's *The Lost Elementary Schools of Victorian England* (London 1984) deals extensively with Bristol, and argues that early surveys under-estimated the number of 'dame' schools; on the reliability of education statistics in the period see also the debate engendered by E.G.West's 'Resource Allocation and Growth in Early Nineteenth-Century British Education' *Economic History Review* vol. xxiii, 1, (1970); J.S.Hurt 'Professor West on Early Nineteenth Century Education' and E.G.West 'The Interpretation of Early Nineteenth Century Education Statistics' in *Economic History Review* vol. xxiv, 4 (1971); H.J.Kiesling 'Nineteenth Century Education According to West: A Comment' and E.G.West 'Nineteenth Century Educational History: The Kiesling Critique' *Economic History Review* (1983).

contribution of around 2d. per week was expected, so the majority were not strictly 'public' schools. [19] The success of the endowed schools over the decade between the two surveys reflects the efforts of charity trustees to reform the management of their trusts, and to invest increased or regained funds in expansion. The extent of Sunday schooling over and above that suggested by *Table 8A.2* is also striking, particularly since it provided the *only* education received by 32.8% of the Bristol scholars of 1841. [20]

Public health charities also loom large in *Table 8A.1* throughout the nineteenth century., and *Table 8A.4* disaggregates the component parts, revealing the domination of two types of

Table 8A.4 Bristol's health charities, 1800-1900, by type.

	Lying-in	General	Disability	Specialised	Nursing	Safety
1800s	2	1				
1810s	1	1	1	2		
1820s	1	2				
1830s	3	3	1	1		
1840s	1	1		1		
1850s	1	2	1	1		
1860s	1	1		1	1	1
1870s		3	1			
1880s				1	1	
1890s		1	2		1	

association, the dispensaries and hospitals, which continued to appear throughout the period, and the lying-in and Dorcas societies of the early and mid-century (although several still functioned in 1900). [21] Specialised institutions appeared regularly, addressing diseases of eyes, teeth, ears and skin and the needs of the blind, deaf and dumb, and physically crippled. It was only from the 1860s that nursing was recognised as an object of voluntarist concern. Two societies concerned with water safety are also included in the category, though one of these was formed pre-1800 and doesn't appear in the Table. [22]

19 Statistics of Education in Bristol' *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* vol. IV, (1841) pp.253, 254, 256; only ten of the 1841 voluntary schools were entirely supported by subscription (five evening, five day schools).

20 Ibid., p.256, Table No.2.

21 Dorcas societies were named after the Biblical heroine, see F.K.Prochaska *Women and Philanthopy* op. cit., pp. 16-17

22 The Bristol Humane Society for the Recovery of Persons Apparently Dead by Drowning, which placed and maintained grappling hooks around the docks for use in rescues, and paid rewards for successful rescues or recussitations by doctors: *Bristol Gazette* 27/7/1806; BRL B9368 is the Society's 1816 report; for the Royal Humane Society, London, D.Owen op. cit., pp.60-1; *FFBJ* 1/7/1797; *Bristol Gazette* 25/2/1836; a branch of the Royal National Life-Boat Institution began in the 1860s.

A third category which can be meaningfully broken down by type is the religious charities (*Table 8A.5*). In addition to the churches' role in addressing poverty and education, those with a primarily religious function included societies which evangelised locally, foreign missions, and a few geared to church building and the support of clergy. While new formations were a persistent feature of the period, an intense burst of domestic and foreign evangelising characterised the 1810s and 1820s. The subsequent establishments of the mid and late century, though numerous, were on the whole smaller and more specialised.

Table 8A.5 Bristol religious charities, 1800-1900, by type.

	Evangelising	*Missionary*	*Building*	*Support*
pre-1800				2
1800s	1			
1810s	5	3		
1820s	6	5	1	1
1830s	2			1
1840s	2	4		
1850s	1	1		
1860s	2	1		2
1870s	2	4	1	1
1880s	1	1		
1890s	3		1	

What was the relationship between the overall rate of voluntarist formations set out here and the actual scale of provision at a given time ? It is impossible to be certain, since not all stayed the course. Some merged with others (eg. the amalgamation of the Bristol Temperance Society and the Gospel Temperance Union in 1883), some transformed their function (the mutation of the PMFS from multi-faceted assault on mendicity to management of the Bristol Savings Bank) and some dissolved (campaign groups such as the anti-slavery societies). [23] Similarly a number of separate charities could represent the work of a small group of activists. [24] Nonetheless, the evidence of the trade directories suggests a marked accumulation of charitable provision, with around thirty-four voluntary charities listed in 1794, 104 in 1851, and 204 in 1900.

[23] J.W.Arrowsmith *Dictionary of Bristol* (Bristol, 1906) p.395; PMFS, Ch.7 b); for example the Bristol and Clifton Ladies Anti-Slavery Society, started in 1840 and persisted until the American Civil War.

[24] In the 1850s the city's Anglican vicars, under diocesan leadership, were the chief movers of the Bristol Diocesan District Visiting Society, the Bristol Chuch Missionary Association, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the Bristol Auxiliary Irish Church Mission, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society: *Bristol Mercury* 13/2/1858, 20/3/1858, 13/5/1858,2/10/1858, 23/10/1858.

Appendix 7

Infirmary annual accounts

The table shows the Infirmary's accounts as published annually in its report to subscribers, and is intended principally as an appendix to Chapter 9. A standard accounting format was not observed through the period surveyed, 1742-1870, so I have used the following categories:

Subs: Annual subscriptions due, though this was not always the amount collected as a small amount was in arrears each year.

Securities: Income from investment.

Legacies: Donations and Benefactions.

Sundry: see below.

Workmen: workmen's subscriptions were collated separately towards the end of the sequence.

Collections: sums collected in churches and chapels.

Total In/Out: Balance recorded in report.

Costs: Total annual expenditure.

Misc.: see below.

In-pat: In-patient totals, recorded every five years.

Out-pat.: Out-patient totals, recorded every five years.

Subscriber: Number of subscribers, recorded every five years.

In addition to subscription, what were the other components of annual income ? The 'Sundry' category includes one-off benefactions, small sums deposited in the Infirmary poor-box, and a host of oddments. For example, in the early part of the sequence the courts or other authorities occasionally ordered the guilty to make amends with a gift to the hospital. The 1811 report noted receipt of compensation paid for an assault, '...a Sin Offering from three Idle apprentices to the Bristol Infirmary, shooting and trespassing in Sneed Park' and '...a Fine on A.B. inflicted by the Mayor for imprudent conduct to a Female'. [1] There were also benefits, such as the Music Festivals mentioned earlier, and more modest gifts such as £9-10s in 1816

[1] BRO 35893 21 c).

from Indian jugglers, £31-10s in 1825 raised by 'an exhibition of horsemanship', and £1-9s in 1863 from 'Gentlemen Christmas Carol Singers'. [2]

Church collections made a minor contribution, and in some years did not take place at all. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries congregations regularly sent in money, with dissenting places of worship yielding the largest sums: in 1773 the Quakers gave £58, the Lewins Mead Meeting £30, while the most generous Anglican collection was the £17 raised at St James. [3] However, from the end of the Napoleonic War to the late 1840s church collections were only held in three years, and this perhaps reflects the withdrawal of non-conformists, who were vital contributors: in 1809 collection money had come from two Independent chapels, three Methodist, one Quaker, one Unitarian and one Catholic and six Anglican churches. [4] The 1816-1846 period has already been identified as one in which sectional antagonism penetrated the city's political and institutional life, so it is not unlikely that this atmosphere was hostile to the form. Restoration of collection coincides with the gradual calming of Bristol politics, and new heights were reached after the introduction in 1860 of a 'Hospital Sunday', where all churches and chapels collected on the second Sunday of January, and the proceeds were divided between the General and the Infirmary. [5]

Right at the end of the sequence the category of 'Workmen's Collections' makes an appearance. The appearance of '...accumulative contributions in small sums' from factories and workplaces was first noted in the 1846 report and initially these were included in the subscription total. [6] As their size increased, from £76 in 1847 to £291 in 1852, to £814 by 1870, so they were thought to merit separate listing.

It should be noted that the sums I have counted as legacies, benefactions and sundries are in most cases additions of several separate figures. Inevitably there is scope for human error here !

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2 BRO 35893 21 c), e).
3 BRO 35893 21 a).
4 BRO 35893 21 c).
5 G.Munro Smith op. cit., p.332; apparently the idea of Hospital Sunday originated in Birmingham.
6 BRO 35893 21 e).

BRISTOL INFIRMARY 1742-1870

Year	Subs	Securities	Legacies	Sundry	Workmen	Collections	Total In/Out	Costs	Misc	In-pat	Out-pat	Subscriber	Year
1742	588	133	5,000	34			5,763	781		349	581	209	1742
1743	738	178		266			1,212	904					1743
1744	744	196	181	183			1,500	986					1744
1745	741	196	341	639			1,984	1,005					1745
1746	708	217		165			1,137	914					1746
1747	724	217	440	277			1,974	1,010		593	1,117	285	1747
1748	773	217	190	160			2,023	1,446					1748
1749	768	217	250	134			1,916	1,733					1749
1750	779	217	200	80			1,682	1,682					1750
1740's av	*729*	*199*	*943*	*215*			*2,132*	*1,162*					
1751	909	209	70	4,227		375	5,830	1,644					1751
1752	921	297		574			1,848	1,696		693	1,642	378	1752
1753	925	298		233			1,494	1,775					1753
1754	930	298		750			2,254	1,829					1754
1755	926	280		653			1,942	2,215					1755
1756	972	280	200	294		266	2,148	2,148					1756
1757	989	290	859	327		662	3,197	2,473		1,214	2,658	425	1757
1758	1,066	267	250	234		9	2,369	2,369					1758
1759	1,159	257	300	225		566	2,556	2,427					1759
1760	1,126	257	370	157			2,144	2,144					1760
1750's av	*992*	*273*	*342*	*767*		*376*	*2,578*	*2,072*					
1761	1,113	270	791	120			2,699	2,271					1761
1762	1,098	270	1,041	77		356	2,963	2,665		1,157	2,633	466	1762
1763	1,137	270	651	244			2,786	2,253	532				1763
1764	1,109	270	600	113			2,274	2,112	57				1764
1765	1,095	270	700	182			2,535	2,247	208				1765
1766	1,112	270	810	403			2,706	2,477					1766
1767	1,226	278	773	289			3,165	2,685		1,206	3,464	514	1767
1768	1,186	288	857	107		192	2,989	2,363	31				*1768*
1769	1,193	290	503	205		220	2,477	2,213					1769
1760's av	*1,141*	*275*	*747*	*193*		*256*	*2,733*	*2,365*	*207*				
1770													
1771	1,251	290	1,690	337		181	4,308	2,763					1771
1772	1,317	315	150	687		263	3,116	2,729		1,224	3,026	562	1772
1773	1,288	315	350	290		176	2,895	2,565					1773
1774	1,283	360	1,425	474		250	4,185	2,449					1774
1775	1,286	390	325	109		215	2,815	2,463					1775

Year	Subs	Securities	Legacies	Sundry	Workmen	Collections	Total In/Out	Costs	Misc	In-pat	Out-pat	Subscriber	Year
1776	1,335	390	700	69		236	3,124	2,445					1776
1777	1,338	405	400	272		263	2,986	2,384		1,507	2,618	579	1777
1778	1,280	526	470	222		167	2,929	2,436					1778
1779	1,235	562	5,720	101		70	8,201	2,546					1779
1780	1,172	686	350	126		122	2,844	2,327					1780
1770's av	*1,162*	*385*	*1,053*	*244*		*177*	*3,400*	*2,282*					
1781	1,259	686	575	574		91	3,741	2,340					1781
1782	1,274	686	677	101			4,157	2,373		1,410	2,616	539	1782
1783	1,153	734	252	498		3	3,066	2,675					1783
1784	1,134	734	80	204		16	4,313	2,796	1,440				1784
1785	1,079	659	125	309			5,280	2,642					1785
1786	1,108	584	1,130	106		221	3,167	2,470	327				1786
1787	1,100	629	191	138		109	2,819	2,492	207	1,392	3,216	486	1787
1788	1,051	614	454	1,672		113	4,891	3,282	1,609				1788
1789	1,067	614	1,200	213		128	7,656	3,086	3,603				1789
1790	1,157	247	2,633	328		148	4,968	2,495					1790
1780's av	*1,138*	*619*	*732*	*414*		*104*	*4,406*	*2,665*	*1,437*				
1791	1,194	637	47	879		87	5,874	2,809					1791
1792	1,297	369	370	639		129	4,955	3,110		1,445	3,145	570	1792
1793	1,289	344	150	1,798		247	6,212	3,757	*1,250*				*1793*
1794	1,442	344	700	1,017		210	5,479	2,395	188				1794
1795	1,521	344	775	219		138	4,821	3,255					1795
1796	1,567	344	191	3,262		151	5,366	3,566					1796
1797	2,054	363	612	10,208		202	13,515	2,055		1,315	2,607	918	1797
1798	2,189	700	243	321		146	4,245	3,541					1798
1799	2,094	566	566	322		132	4,384	3,387					1799
1800	2,283	783	994	642		432	5,405	4,122					*1800*
1790's av	*1,693*	*479*	*465*	*1,931*		*187*	*6,026*	*3,200*	*719*				
1801	2,075	868	1,921	612		204	6,320	4,043					1801
1802	2,035	960	617	705		467	5,088	3,473		1,290	2,830	915	1802
1803	1,913	1,007	667	843		161	5,073	3,798					1803
1804	1,968	1,057	1,268	783		221	6,029	3,752					1804
1805	2,051	1,421	462	9,326		752	14,293	4,856					1805
1806	2,763	870	730	382		234	11,745	4,691	1,092				1806
1807	2,790	1,003	376	288		206	10,419	4,717	2,405	1,219	2,593	1,062	1807
1808	2,849	1,023	541	790		260	8,948	4,949	2,561				1808
1809	2,478	2,326	322	420		273	8,120	4,874	1,787				1809
1810	2,690	3,914	522	1,025		202	8,968	5,313	1,237				1810
1800's av	*2,361*	*1,445*	*743*	*1,517*		*298*	*8,500*	*4,447*	*1,816*				

Year	Subs	Securities	Legacies	Sundry	Workmen	Collections	Total In/Out	Costs	Misc	In-pat	Out-pat	Subscriber	Year
1811	2,739	1,299	1,210	526		239	6,692	4,505	250				1811
1812	2,749	1,712	1,365	313		409	7,849	5,356	1,126	1,303	2,520	1,092	1812
1813	3,237	1,638	648	960		313	7,090	5,603	526				1813
1814	3,407	1,615	335	1,789		289	8,163	4,691	455				1814
1815	3,118	1,656	1,090	248		190	8,732	5,019	40				1815
1816	3,015	1,888	728	586		37	7,006	5,196	360				1816
1817	3,351	4,446	532	604			9,967	6,237	103	1,608	3,955	1,250	1817
1818	2,636	1,968	682	27			6,970	5,860	80				1818
1819	3,029	1,966	1,099	82			8,593	6,202	100				1819
1820	2,520	2,019	790	366			8,004	5,455	87				1820
1810's av	*2,980*	*2,021*	*848*	*550*		*246*	*7,907*	*5,412*	*313*				
1821	2,785	1,924	370	662			6,388	4,895	87				1821
1822	1,694	1,958	551	275			5,272	4,702	80	1,720	3,865	1,004	1822
1823	3,167	1,947	212	94			5,848	4,749	68				1823
1824	2,384	1,980	1,085	611			6,647	4,787	98				1824
1825	2,368	1,939	2,397	38			7,844	5,149	72				1825
1826	2,365	1,970	135	83			9,144	5,538	132				1826
1827	2,335	1,879	494	281		278	7,676	5,270	27	1,934	4,635	979	1827
1828	2,628	1,883	2,287	108		37	7,939	5,983	40				1828
1829	2,452	1,918	402	127			5,915	5,677	33				1829
1830	2,426	1,918	1,114	61			5,882	5,467	46				1830
1820's av	*2,460*	*1,932*	*905*	*234*		*158*	*6,856*	*5,222*	*68*				
1831	2,329	1,921	1,273	265			7,729	6,048	47				1831
1832	2,326	1,869	296	115			7,731	5,848	35	1,814	5,461	954	1832
1833	2,141	1,784	2,064	170			9,038	5,672	41				1833
1834	2,093	1,826	1,392	193			6,433	5,262	26				1834
1835	2,114	1,841	1,185	53			5,821	5,070	27				1835
1836	1,999	1,841	1,007	10			5,864	5,670	32				1836
1837	1,868	1,841	1,369	139			5,849	5,816	33	1,544	5,077	820	1837
1838	1,893	1,858	2,094	128			8,159	5,731	51				1838
1839	2,203	1,879	1,011	361		343	8,146	6,160	44				1839
1840	2,174	1,883	309	1,049			8,186	6,086	31				1840
1830's av	*2,114*	*1,854*	*1,200*	*248*		*343*	*7,296*	*5,736*	*37*				
1841	2,257	1,883	525	271			8,467	6,086	37				1841
1842	2,244	1,855	1,316	405			9,028	5,908	43	2,189	5,730	1,041	1842
1843	2,317	1,882	503	348			8,594	5,450	42				1843
1844	2,288	1,753	542	1,080			9,282	5,408	32				1844
1845	2,404	1,888	1,556	130		27	7,242	5,367	31				1845

Year	Subs	Securities	Legacies	Sundry	Workmen	Collections	Total In/Out	Costs	Misc	In-pat	Out-pat	Subscriber	Year
1846	2,353	1,806	923	1,281		116	7,723	5,856	39				1846
1847	2,260	1,822	155	415		7	7,195	6,309	35	2,062	9,750	1,089	1847
1848	2,294	1,900	1,561	564		280	8,854	6,203	30				1848
1849	3,287	1,861	863	1,009		120	9,297	7,134	29				1849
1850	2,701	1,861	550	508			9,752	8,003	29				1850
1840's av	*2,219*	*1,683*	*772*	*546*		*92*	*7,767*	*5,611*	*32*				
1851	2,451	1,861	998	1,094			11,242	7,347	36				1851
1852	2,570	1,861	2,187	1,470	291	744	11,782	7,342	45	2,699	17,161	1,181	1852
1853	2,631	1,837	1,149	774			10,622	8,266	47				1853
1854	2,816	1,654	874	664		233	12,252	8,300	67				1854
1855	2,939	1,472	830	165	389	9	15,927	7,238	31				1855
1856	2,086	1,560	2,150	179	448	182	7,924	7,832	81				1856
1857	2,905	2,393	425	1,073		61	8,868	8,827	117	2,490	19,166	1,266	1857
1858	2,838	2,283	169	572		295	9,491	9,419	84				1858
1859	2,810	1,824	95	910		195	11,245	8,123	75				1859
1860	2,917	1,817	2,226	671	449	143	14,118	8,761	57				1860
1850's av	*2,696*	*1,856*	*1,110*	*757*	*394*	*233*	*11,347*	*8,146*	*64*				
1861	2,926	1,842	795	2,216	684	675	14,132	8,321	47				1861
1862	2,942	1,835	2,184	451	617	409	8,746	7,893	43	2,945	16,254	1,209	1862
1863	2,908	1,820	1,100	434	656	459	8,142	8,118	40				1863
1864	2,884	1,821	1,288	369	633	536	8,379	8,111	92				1864
1865	2,918	1,823	1,241	436	724	495	9,132	8,448	67				1865
1866	2,935	2,136	3,268	1,336	732	770	11,939	8,145	65				1866
1867	2,825	1,903	3,554	265	786	610	13,199	9,932	65	2,572	21,033	1,166	1867
1868	2,811	926	3,661	652	759	569	14,597	10,044	59				1868
1869	2,846	927	1,827	165	766	624	17,339	9,900	72				1869
1870	2,862	930	2,572	680	814	595	15,580	10,051	49				1870
1860's av	*2,886*	*1,596*	*2,149*	*700*	*717*	*574*	*12,119*	*8,896*	*60*				

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